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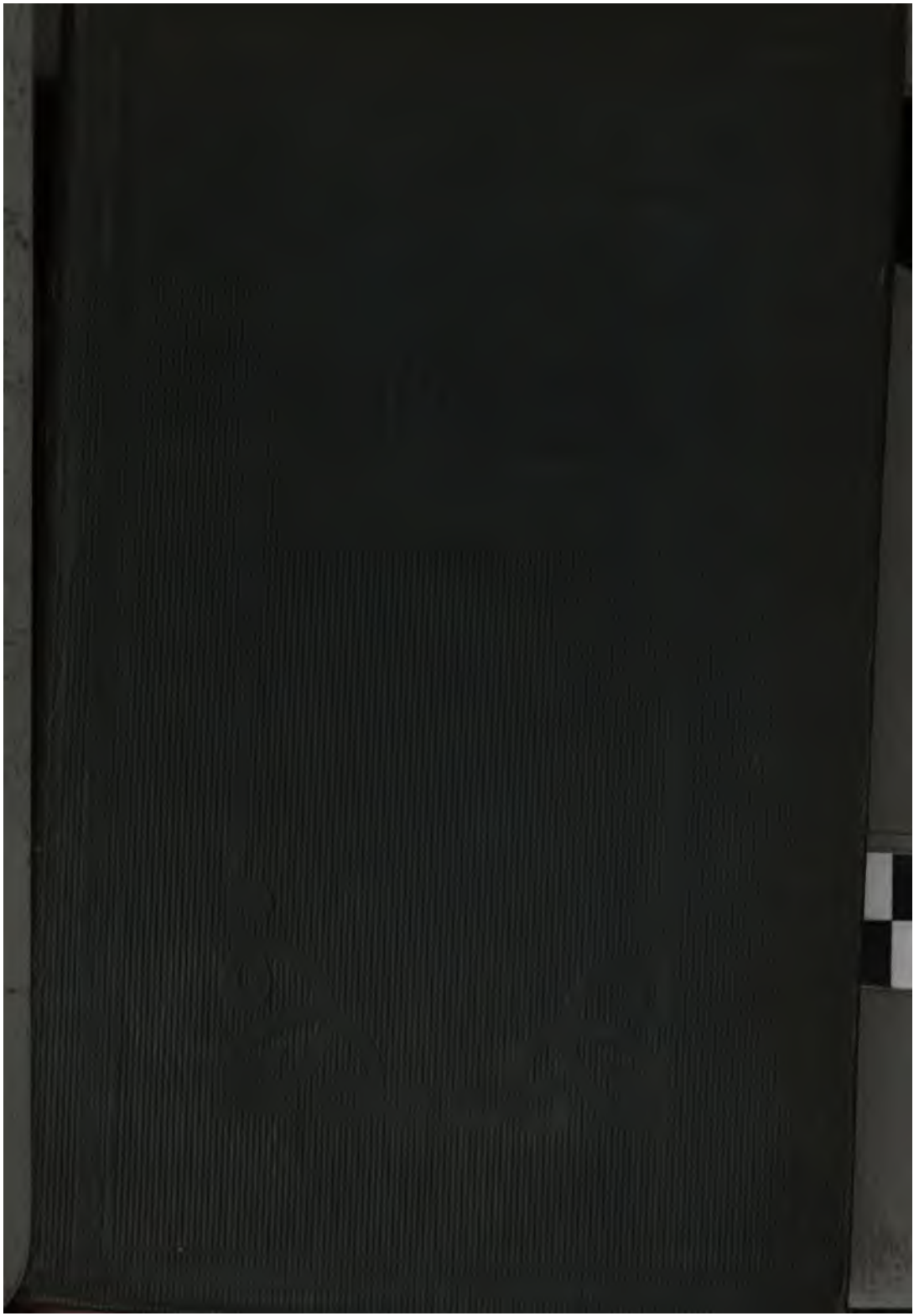

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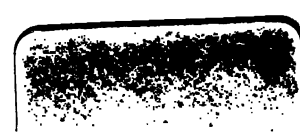

THE

"MONSTER" MISERY

OF

IRELAND;

A PRACTICAL TREATISE ON THE

RELATION OF LANDLORD AND TENANT,

WITH

Suggestions for Legislative Measures,

AND THE MANAGEMENT OF LANDED PROPERTY,

THE RESULT OF ABOVE THIRTY YEARS' EXPERIENCE
AND STUDY OF THE SUBJECT.

BY

JOHN WIGGINS, ESQ. F.G.S.

ENGLISH AGENT TO ESTATES IN THE SOUTH AND NORTH OF IRELAND.

"Property has its duties as well as its rights."

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RICHARD BENTLEY, NEW BURLINGTON STREET,

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PREFACE.

THIS Essay is the matured result of my annual visits to Ireland, on Land Agency business, during a period of above thirty years. These visits have afforded me much insight into the character of the *people* of that country, and thus I have acquired a high, if not enthusiastic, degree of admiration for many points of that character, appearing through the physical privations and the moral "clouds and darkness" which "settle round their heads." On a journey of two months, during the last autumn, to both the North and South of Ireland, I perceived a crisis approaching of the utmost importance to that portion of the Irish community amongst whom has chiefly been my intercourse, viz. the landlords and tenants,—both very important classes, and both alike engaging my solicitude, because I believe the prosperity of the one

to depend on that of the other. Thus feeling, and having succeeded in attracting attention and approbation to former efforts of my pen on this subject, and my evidence before the Committee of 1830 being often quoted, I was irresistibly prompted, by a sort of *amor patriæ*, to employ every leisure hour, *whilst in Ireland*, in sketching "A Treatise on the relation of Landlord and Tenant." This sketch has unconsciously swelled into a volume, in venturing to print which, I am aware of the disfavour that attends proposals of amendment for the future, since it implies anything but commendation of the present. Still I felt that such a crisis as this had not before occurred. It appeared to me that *now* "something *must be* done" on the question of landlord and tenant, and that this was a moment to "be just, and fear not." The appointment of a Commission has not altered my determination to offer my sentiments to the public, since I have no reason to conclude that their inquiries will take the course which I have followed, and if they should fall into any similar course, I shall be too proud in such a cause to act the part of "the lion's provider."

I am sensible of the temerity of any one in private life suggesting legislative measures of any kind; but it seemed to me, that all the present

inquiries into the subject of landlord and tenant having such measures in view, the exercise of such temerity might be useful in affording hints, which, if acted on, might do good, and if neglected could not be mischievous.

But as to the matters of business, relating to the management of estates, herein brought forward, they are advanced with the confidence of experience, and urged with the zeal of earnest good wishes towards both landlord and tenant.

All the books hitherto written on Ireland have been general, embracing many topics, and leaving little room for the *special* subject of the following pages. To this subject particular attention is now imperatively called, and I know not that it has before been specifically treated.

Believing, therefore, my remarks to be original, and by experience knowing them to be practical, I have toiled through my task with pleasure and ardent zeal, but not, I hope, without "due discretion." I have endeavoured to convey truths without asperity, to point out errors without inflicting pain, and to mention facts without giving offence. If any selfish motive in putting forth these pages has intruded, it is a natural desire to sustain, as well as a philanthropic wish to recommend, modes of proceeding which I believe myself

to have been the first to apply extensively, and the good effects of which I have largely tested.

I have strictly followed Paley's maxim, mentioned in the preface of his Moral Philosophy. He says, "My method of writing has constantly been this; to extract what I could from my own stores, and my own reflections, in the first place; to put down that; and afterwards to consult such readings as fell in my way."

THE AUTHOR.

30, TAVISTOCK PLACE,
November, 1843.

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A TREATISE

ON THE RELATION OF

LANDLORD AND TENANT IN IRELAND,

&c. &c.

CHAPTER I.

OF THE GENERAL STATE OF THIS RELATION.

THE relation of Landlord and Tenant is one of the most difficult to analyse in all that vast compound of anomalies which the numerous and interesting community of Ireland presents to the world. It is also one of the most important subjects of consideration at the present crisis, since upon the proprieties of that relation must depend, in a great degree, the well-being of a dense population, at this time essentially agricultural, and destined to all appearance long to continue so.

Let us, then, inquire a little into,

1st. The present state of that relation: and,

2dly. What might be done to improve it.

Let us

"Expatiate free o'er all *this* scene of man,
A mighty maze, but not without a plan."

That the present state of this important social relation in Ireland is *generally* far from good, seems to be almost everywhere admitted, because it is everywhere seen and felt. It cannot escape the observation of any one having the slightest knowledge of that country, that its occupying tenantry are reduced to a low state of serfage;—that their mode of living is low; their condition abject; their treatment haughty; their distance from any intercourse with the lords of the soil, immense; that in general, they are handed over to the tender mercies of agents, whose chief duty is deemed to consist in the exaction, by every possible means, of the highest possible rent; and that the mere *collection* is regarded by their employers as a full discharge of an agent's duties, and God knows that is an arduous duty enough when rents are too high, though an easy duty otherwise. That this is the general state of things, there can be no doubt. It is true that the exceptions are numerous; yet that *it is* the general state, may be inferred from the *éclat* derived from every instance of good landlordism. Would the late Lord Caledon, or the present Marquis of Downshire, in the North, or the late Lord Headley in the South, have been so much extolled as good landlords, if such goodness had been common? Certainly not. Such landlords would in England

be deemed only as merely performing their duty towards their neighbours, with eminent good policy towards themselves.

If we contrast the condition, moral, social, and domestic, of tenants under a really good landlord, with those under the common run of landlords in Ireland, and compare the order, comfort, and prosperity of the one, with the discontents, poverty, and misery of the other, we shall find the difference immense, and of a nature to account for much of the general want of prosperity, want of comfort, and want of content, of the Irish population.

Amongst the landlords and other protestants, many are disposed to attribute these wants to religious differences, especially to Romanism. But a close view into the matter will show—that upon the minds of a poor population, whether scattered amongst wild mountains and deep bogs, spread in idle industry over vast tracts of grazing lands, toiling in the corn-growing districts, or densely congregated in towns, the influence of the priests is, in a general view, of the most salutary description. We find the Irish to be a people of strong constitutions and robust frames, notwithstanding the poverty of their food; and consequently all their passions are strong. What, we ask, prevents the passions of such a people—so poor, so situated, so employed, so lodged—from being ungovernable? Certainly, and unfortunately, *not* the terrors of the law. What, in fact, induces and enables these people to govern their passions,

but the terrors of their church, joined to those religious ceremonies, those public exhortations, those domestic visitations, and constant personal intercourse, whence is derived the influence of the priest? Let us indeed ask ourselves, what sort of man *we* should *choose* as the spiritual guide of a people living amongst wild mountains and dreary bogs, badly fed, scarcely clothed, and wretchedly hovelled, *not* housed? Should we not wish for one hardy enough to undergo the fatigue of visiting them in sickness, and of instructing them in health; one not too delicate to surmount the rugged rocky track, wind through the treacherous bog, and brave the terrific storm; one of mind and habits sufficiently elevated above his flock to be respected, but near enough to their level to be understood? Such a man is, or has been, the Roman priest; whose influence it is which subdues and regulates, in a great degree, the fierce passions of a fiery people, and has almost obliterated one odious and mischievous vice, that of drunkenness, and thus removed a national reproach. This it is which renders chastity the common virtue of one sex, and the forcible violation of it extremely rare in the other; and through this it is that violence, if not altogether suppressed, (and alas! where is it so?) is confined to revenge, and seldom occurs for the sake of plunder. Even theft is, in nearly all cases, the result of want; though rare, even when want is extreme. Many of their crimes arise from

such necessity. Thus, for instance, it would seem to most persons a wanton atrocity for a great number of men to assemble and dig up a pasture field, until it is known that the dairy farmer will not, or by the terms of his holding cannot, otherwise let the land in roods for potatoes, which, when broken up, he must so let, though at the high rate of 12*l.* per acre. Alas! "there are no laws for the belly," and "hunger breaks through stone walls." If men themselves could or would starve, their children cry aloud for food; and many of the faction fights and lesser quarrels arise from outbidding each other for potato land.

To those who would transfer this influence of the Roman Priest to the Protestant incumbent we say, that in order to this, two conditions must be complied with; viz.—1st. The agrarial population must be made more comfortable by an amendment in the relation of landlord and tenant. 2d. The Protestant clergyman must be able to *work* as hard *amongst* and *for* the people, as the Roman does now.

As to paying the priests, it appears not only unnecessary, because the people *will* pay them also, but a sure mode of preventing for ever that spread of protestantism which might be looked for under a flourishing state of the population. There is, even now, an evident tendency towards protestantism in all those who become properous; but with regard to the priests, these are not the times to purchase them according to the principle—

"What makes all doctrines plain and clear?
About two hundred pounds a-year;
And that which was proved true before
Prove false again? Two hundred more."

That the unbounded influence of the priests should *sometimes* be exerted banefully, is no wonder. Banefully, did I say? how stands the case? The priest, by personal intercourse with, and attention to, his flock, becomes identified with them, not only in spiritual but in temporal matters. He is cognizant, intimately cognizant, of all the transactions between the agent, who is *de facto* the landlord, and the *poor* tenants of every estate which happens to be within his cure. He *sees* the oppression, which his flock *feel*. I have said, that he sees the oppression, *i. e.* that he knows it to be oppression, and feeling in a peculiar manner for every individual of his flock, he *does feel* the oppression, *as if* suffering it himself.

Hence it is mainly owing to the low state of the occupying tenantry that the influence of the priests is so unbounded; not, on the contrary, as sometimes taken, that the low state of the people is owing to the influence of the priests.

But, if landlords have sometimes to complain of this influence being used to excite discontent, and clamour at real, or what to them may seem fancied oppressions, they enjoy, as a set off, the general advantage of having the minds and passions of their tenants sufficiently subdued, to be enabled to impose upon them a yoke which is *not easy*, and a

burthen which is *not light,* and meet with even tolerably patient submission to this yoke, till the sufferers are bowed down to the ground.

In accordance with this view of the case, we find, in practice, that the rents are far higher in proportion to the produce of the land in those parts of Ireland where Romanism prevails, than in other parts where Protestantism is professed by a considerable portion of the population.

If, however, the influence of the priests be as *great* as we believe, it must be in a high degree *genial,* and must promote that industry without which no rent whatever could be paid for much of the coarse mountainous land in Ireland. Romanism is therefore not the cause of the miseries of Ireland, or of the bad state of the relation of landlord and tenant in that country.

The relation of landlord and tenant in Ireland is doubtless on a bad footing in many respects. The tenant is in general treated with much too great hauteur and distance by the landlord; often, indeed, with gross insult. He is protected, it is true, and often in wrong doing, but only as an appanage to the estate, not as a fellow-creature, contributing to his landlord's comfort, and in a social view forming a portion of his family. Many, if not most, of the largest landowners are completely unacquainted with their tenantry, and know but little of their own lands. And the frequency of leases for lives, or for ever, makes landlords regard the lands so leased, as the mere security for certain annuities,

payable out of them. There are, it is true, many honourable exceptions, but they are far from being common, and it is the general state of things of which we now treat; examples of eminently good, and also of atrociously bad conduct towards tenantry, might be numerously quoted; but, in a general point of view, if any proofs were wanting of the utter derangement of the important relation between landlord and tenant, they would be abundantly supplied in that "evidence of facts," which presents itself to the eye, and reaches the heart, of every traveller in Ireland, moving him now with compassion, now with indignation, until, alas! through the deadening powers of habit and familiarity, both his eye and his heart become callous to the impressions at first made on them by the actual state of the occupying tenantry. It is, indeed, quite surprising how soon this callosity ensues on habitual observation. One is certainly at first shocked at the apparent want of comfort: soon we grow reconciled to it, seeing the cheerfulness of the inmates of a mud cabin: then, beginning to fancy that nothing more is wanting to the happiness of such beings, we become quite content with ourselves in allowing so much, and doubtful whether the real amount of health, strength, and spirits enjoyed in the cabins on our estate, in spite of so many privations, does not exceed that which we ourselves experience in our castles, with "all appliances and means to boot;" whence we draw the conclusion, that the enjoyments of the cabin

might still afford to be decreased, and those of the castle need to be augmented. However, one cannot *at first* behold the wretched and filthy habitations —the inadequate outbuildings—the ragged habiliments—the poor food—the miserable fences—the total neglect of draining—the crops smothered with weeds, and the thousand other indications of poverty, without feeling a conviction that there is something wrong, indeed that much, very much, is wrong between landlord and tenant. If this is the state of the inhabitants of the principal cabin upon a farm, though, according to the habit of the Irish to use the superlative term, it may be dignified by the name of "the mansion," what is the tenfold misery of the "cottars" or dwellers in the cabins or huts of the labourers on the same farm, whose catalogue of enjoyments is as follows:—a hole dug in the bog, walled with the sods excavated, roofed with bog sticks, and covered with potato haulm; day clothes scanty, bed clothes almost none, and the children seeking warmth by contact with the pig! Yet even these look with compassion on the wandering beggar, and swell the already loaded wallet with potatoes from their scanty store.

If this miserable state of the occupying tenantry and their dependents was not general, if it was confined to the wild mountains of the West, to the rocky shores of Kerry, the interminable bogs of Connemara, or the dreary wastes of Donegal, we might attribute it in great measure to the poverty

of the soil, and the ruggedness of the country. But the same state of things prevails over the rich plains of Limerick and Tipperary, and continues to the suburbs of the most opulent and prosperous cities of the island. It is seen almost equally amongst the larger tenants of above one hundred pounds rent, and those who with difficulty raise the annual value of two cows' grass.

It is true, indeed, that the Irish, as a people, as a race, do not possess the taste of the Dutch for nicety in their dwellings, nor of the English for cleanliness in their persons. These "*virtues*" are certainly not conspicuous in the Irish; and there is even reason to believe them either absent or dormant, since we observe families of opulence extremely deficient in them. Officers themselves, who have served for many years in the army or navy, where these virtues must have been practised long enough to become habitual, settle down for the most part into their former mode of living. One even finds rich farmers content with houses on the ground floor, with damp walls, and loathsome beetles and other insects crawling on the floors; and the nuisances of the *bed* are but little abated by the gorgeous patterned *plate*, and superfluous viands, which adorn the *board*.

But these facts, however striking, may be accounted for without supposing any natural slovenliness in the Irish, since the same things are equally observable in the Saxon as the Celtic race, and I think arise from a kind of necessity, which all

but the richest families are under, of somewhat conforming to the mode of living prevalent in the country, and of contenting themselves with that degree of neatness which their *servants* have been accustomed to from their infancy, or can afterwards be taught.

Thus, so far as the wretched mode of living universal in Ireland amongst the occupying tenantry is chargeable on the existing derangement of the relation between landord and tenant—and I am inclined to attribute a large, very large portion of it to that source—so far does the just dispensation of Providence oblige the one to share more or less in the want of those comforts which are denied to the other. What is it that occasions the desertion of so many noble mansions and domains, indeed that so few remain suitably occupied, but the wretched state of the population around them, rendering it painful to minds of any cultivation, or high degree of refinement, to live amongst them?

The principal causes of the existing derangement in the relation of landlord and tenant are in my opinion threefold, viz.:—

1st. Rent, and other payments.

2d. Want of proper leases.

3d. Want of assistance in buildings and improvements.

I propose to consider these points seriatim.

CHAPTER II.

OF RENT, AND OTHER PAYMENTS.

In tracing the present state of the relation of landlord and tenant in Ireland, we must admit, however reluctantly, that too high rent, or in other words, *too large a share of the produce of the soil*, is exacted (but too generally) of the occupiers of land in that country: and there can be no doubt of this being one of the most fruitful causes of discontent. Every writer on Ireland speaks of "exorbitant rents," viz., Spenser, Dean Swift, Archbishop Boulter, Rt. Hon. J. Fitzgibbon, Gordon, Newenham, Dr. Woodward, Curwen, Parliamentary Report of, and evidence before, Committees, 1825, 1830, 1832, &c. Wakefield, the latest, says, "It is an undoubted fact, that as landlords they exact more from their tenants, than the same class of men in any other country," (see Sadler's Ireland, p. 49) and the close inspection of any particulars of sale of land will show the fact.

I say we *must admit*, because the fact is

notorious, that rents in Ireland are vastly beyond any *proportion of produce* exacted in England, and because we shall prove them so in the course of our discussion.

This cannot be attributed altogether, nor even for the most part, to want of humanity, or to rapacity, in the lords of the soil. *As a body*, they, generally speaking, are like other educated men in every part of the world, endowed with feelings of moderation and propriety; but, besides the exceptions to this rule, there are many circumstances which take the practical case out of their hands; but though innocent of it in their own persons, they are indirectly the cause of much oppression by various persons, and in various ways.

Many if not most lords of the soil have had the greater part of their possessions alienated from them by leases of long duration, and their lands are now occupied by tenants under tenants removed several times from the head landlord. This state of things has occurred, not from any general improvidence in the former possessors of the soil, but from a desire, prudent and judicious at the time, to bring an accession of capital and of energy into a backward country. Those who thus embarked, felt and acted similarly, and although in some instances the park of a tenant for ever overlooks the mansion of the lord of the soil, yet that lord has his reward in the result of the assistance his ancestors obtained,—the conversion of a wil-

derness into a cultivated domain. At the present day, however, each of these removes of freehold ownership is a fresh source of extortion, until the occupying tenant has the land on terms which leave him little more profit than a bare labourer's compensation for working it: still it must be confessed that when any of these leases short of eternity happen to fall in to the lord of the soil, he gives the occupying tenant a holding at a somewhat lower rent than he has heretofore paid to the middleman. This is so far good, but this tenant being almost a pauper, and unable to stock or improve the land, but little change takes place, beyond the transfer of what was a profit rent to the middleman to the pockets of the lord of the soil, and thus the evil is perpetuated. Still, whoever should accuse the lords of the soil of Ireland of extorting from their tenants, would be guilty of a great injustice.

There are of course several grades of landlords, or, more properly, *letters of land*, in that country. I am disposed to think that these may be classed in a three-fold manner, viz.:—

1st. The principal landowners in three grades:—

(*a.*) Those who let their lands on moderate rents, and yet spend a very large portion of their Irish income in the country.

(*b.*) Those who leave all to their agents, and expect them to "send money, not arrears or expenses."

(*c.*) Those who get all they can without committing any great acts of oppression.

2d. The next class consist of those who let their lands at high rates, but do not press hard on their tenants, and help them out each in his own way.

3d. Rapacious landlords, whether landowners, head-renters, or middlemen.

The first class of landlords, those who let their lands to the occupying tenant on what are considered moderate terms, and yet spend a large portion of their Irish revenues in what are called improvements upon their property in that country, form a large proportion of the lords of the soil. Some of the largest estates and rentals in the island are thus circumstanced, and of some of these it has been said, in that "honourable mention" which such landlords so justly enjoy, as a matter of notoriety, that scarcely one-fourth of the gross rental has found its way into the pockets of the landowner, the rest having been spent in what are called by the general term, improvements, a word which comprehends the grander works of building churches, meeting-houses, bridges, court-houses, hotels, castles, streets, breweries, piers, docks, wharfs, &c. &c., also the construction of roads, canals, and the planting of woods, &c. Amongst these landlords may be reckoned the London Companies, besides most of the principal noblemen who possess extensive properties in Ireland. Yet it is remarkable that the tenantry

on these estates do not exhibit much superiority in condition over those of the other classes of landlords, a circumstance which I am inclined to attribute to two causes, viz. :—

1st. To the sums expended, although vast, being chiefly confined to those great works which, when completed, leave the general population as unemployed as ever, and although they create a certain degree of activity for a time, the stagnation is greater than ever afterwards, and the more so since supernumerary workmen are brought to the spot, and continue there; whereas, had the same cost been incurred in promoting the cultivation of the land, still more labour would have been absorbed, and that not temporarily, but continuously and permanently.

2d. Because, although the rents payable to the head landlords of this class are generally moderate, they often become augmented to a ruinous degree, especially in the north, by a custom prevalent there, of the tenants selling what is called the "*tenant right*" or goodwill, to another tenant, the purchaser paying so much money that the produce of the ground scarcely leaves him potatoe diet ever after, and no means whatever of improving the land. But even where this custom does not prevail, the total abandonment of the tenantry to their own unassisted efforts at cultivation, building, and all the very arduous task of establishing a farm sufficiently, accounts for their want of superiority in

the condition of tenantry with moderate rents, over those whose rents are higher; and besides, it may be here remarked, that in a country where very high rents are prevalent, those rents which may be deemed moderate in that country, may be, and in fact often are, high with respect to *that portion of the produce*, which ought fairly to be paid to the landlord as rent, which ought to be considered, as Adam Smith defines it,—"the value of that portion of the produce which remains after paying all taxes, labour, seed, and other expenses, besides ordinary profit out of the produce," but which in Ireland is too often practically taken as the whole value of the produce remaining after the farmer's family has been fed with potatoes, the seed reserved, and the taxes paid.

However mistaken this class of landlords may be in aiming at great works, instead of detailed assistances to their tenants in the cultivation of their lands, still their merits are very great, and the self-denial they practise for the good of their dependent tenants is very exemplary; neither is this species of virtue without its reward, in the "golden opinions" it wins amongst the people.

And in order to show that such instances of good landlordism are not lost upon the Irish, we make two quotations: 1st, from a pamphlet entitled, "Hints to Irish Landlords," 1824.

"But the severest hour of trial occurred in the winter of 1821, when Whiteboyism was at its

height. Possession of the country was actually disputed between the insurgents and the military; communication between town and town was entirely cut off, and atrocities of every kind became frequent. At this period Lord Headley's tenantry, of their own accord, held a meeting and passed the following resolutions, which were signed by the priest, and printed in the *Kerry Evening Post*, of 13th February, 1822:—

"'Resolved,—That we, with horror, detest the savage cruelties and barbarous murders that have been perpetrated in our neighbouring counties and districts, and the lawless efforts that have been lately made to introduce disorder and confusion into our parish.

"'Resolved,—That we solemnly declare, in the presence of God, and before his holy altar, that we have not associated ourselves with any combination or nocturnal meetings, since the commencement of the present disturbances; and that we will, henceforward, to the utmost of our power, repel and discountenance any attempt that may be made to interfere with the peace and tranquillity we at present enjoy.

"'Resolved,—That we gladly embrace this opportunity to return our most sincere thanks and unfeigned gratitude to our landlord, (the Right Hon. Lord Headley,) for having, since the year 1815, permanently abated the one-third of our rents, and given almost constant employment for the discharge of the rents we at present assume,

and thereby consulting our welfare, so as to render it both unnecessary and inexpedient for us to make ourselves a party to the violation of the laws of our God, or of our country.

" 'Resolved,—That we firmly believe, if all the landowners imitated the laudable example of Lord Headley, by a timely lenity and indulgence towards their tenantry, the people of this hitherto loyal and peaceable country would not have recourse to those unprecedented and disgraceful outrages at present so general.' "

2d.—From a Kilkenny newspaper communication, October 1843:—

" IRISH LANDLORDISM.—The arrival of the Marquis of Ormonde and his bride at his ancestral seat in Kilkenny, has been the signal for a most gratifying manifestation of reciprocal feeling between tenantry and landlord. The local papers which arrived this morning are filled with congratulatory addresses to the noble Marquis and Marchioness from the various public bodies, comprising men of all sects, political or religious, as well as from the numerous tenants on his Lordship's extensive estates in the county. 'The results,' says a radical and repeal paper, 'of a voluntary expression of regard, not got up for effect, but emanating directly from the warm impulses of the human heart.' A passage or two from one of these addresses, that from the Dunmore tenantry, may be instructive at the

present period, as illustrative of the celebrated aphorism respecting the duties and rights of property:—

"'Shortly after your revered father succeeded to his ancestral estates, our rents were reduced by an equitable valuation, made by men in whom landlord and tenant could place mutual confidence—men of probity, high character, and practical knowledge. To this valuation your Lordship, with filial piety, had always religiously adhered, departing from it now only to meet the recent depression in the prices of agricultural produce. Your Lordship has made a further reduction of 20 per cent., even on the arrears—in some cases actually remitting the money after being paid—and when it is not in the power of a tenant to pay a full gale, as it becomes due, it is your Lordship's standing order to accept whatever the tenant is able to give. There is no driving, no oppression; and if other landlords in Ireland adopted your Lordship's example, their estates would be as free from discontent and agrarian outrage, as Dunmore, or Garryricken, or Kilcash. In fine, there are widows on your Lordship's estates, tenants at will, to whom a mere nominal rent is charged for their small holdings,—a fact, perhaps, unparalleled in Ireland. When to all this it is added, that our tenures, and consequently the value of the improvements effected by our labour, skill, and capital, are secured to us and to our families—that your Lordship never interferes with us in the untrammelled exercise of our rights

as freemen; and when we compare our condition with that of the serf-tenantry on many other estates in Ireland, we feel that we have reason to thank that gracious Providence which cast our lot under the ancient house of Ormonde.' "

It may be said, and truly too, that nothing can be easier than to get up such demonstrations as these, even under the circumstances of which we herein complain, and because they often answer important purposes, but these instances are quoted because one of them is known to be, and the other believed to be, *genuine*.

The sub-class (*b*), or those who do not press for high rents, but expect their agents to transmit to them all or nearly all their full collections, without expending any on the estates, are only distinguishable from the preceding class by not expending on general or public works. It may, however, be remarked of this species of landlords, that the ratio of their rents is entirely left to their agents, and those functionaries are chargeable with any excess of rent, beyond what may be actually fair and just, especially as over and above the rent insured to the landlord, a poundage thereon is frequently reserved for agency fees, besides what is paid by the landlord.

The sub-class (*c*), or those landlords who obtain all the rent they can, without direct rapacity, may still be reckoned amongst the tolerably good landlords, but approach nearly to—

The second class of landlords, who obtain as high rents as any in the neighbourhood, but who help their tenants in various ways. These are said to "load hard, but to drive easy." The assistance they usually give to their tenants is various; sometimes taking their produce at prices above the market rates, sometimes other modes of assistance are found in building or draining their lands gratuitously, and where these are not practised, and they are so but very partially at present, their pressure of the tenant for payment of the unavoidable arrear is deferred to more fortunate times, but it is seldom forgiven, so that the tenant's nose is perpetually kept "to the grindstone," and accumulation of property is hopeless.

The third class, or rapacious landlords, are those designated by Lord Byron in the following lines:—

> "Their good, ill, health, wealth, joy, or discontent,
> Being, end, aim, religion—rent—rent—rent."

It is impossible to deny that this class is numerous; the state of the country shows it, and we can only say:—

> "'Tis true, 'tis pity, and pity 'tis 'tis true."

The possession and occupation of land are so essential in the dense agricultural population of this country, that much *beyond* the amount of produce that can be ordinarily sold from it will be eagerly *offered as rent*, and this often in addition to what are called *duty-rents*, such as cutting or

carrying the landlord's turf-fuel, sending him a fat pig, rearing his poultry, and keeping his dogs, or the like.

The extent of promises of rent for land, and of the oppressions arising out of it, would be quite incredible to those unacquainted with the actual state of things.

Fancy a "Lord of the soil" (a petty one, it's true) walking with a bevy of bidders *humbly* following him; and after obtaining a bid in money far beyond the value from one, exciting the others to outbid in duty rent, thus: "Well, Mich, you hear what Pat bids: now what will *you* advance?" —"Why, yer honer, God knows it's more than the value, but I'll give yer honer three days turf-drawing."—"Three days is it, my lad, when you know well enough that my turf-stack takes a month's fine weather to get in."—"Och! then," says Denis, "but I'll not grudge yer honer a week."—"By the powers now," says Larry, "I'd give yer honer two weeks, if the place and the rint would kape a horse, or a mule, or a donkey, in the way of drawing; but I'll bring yer honer a fat pig any how, and pay the rint of four pounds an acre as punctually as *any other* man."—"Larry, the land is your's, my boy, and a mighty chape bargain too! Ted Sullivan promised me five pounds an acre plantation, but I was rather doubtful of his manes —I'll only ask ye to cut and save me a few slane, according to times, as ye cannot draw it."

As, however, refinements have advanced, the

mode of letting so truly described by the reporter of "The Times," as prevalent in Wales in September 1843, has been humbly imitated here, viz.—"I have had much conversation with a number of people to-day, relative to a subject which I before mentioned,—the letting of farms by tender. I find that this custom is very common, though not general. It is pursued partially in the three counties of Carmarthen, Pembroke, and Cardigan. I cannot conceive any system more calculated to impoverish the tenant, and at the same time to injure the landlord. Generally, I am told by land agents, and those most likely to know, the custom is this:—a farm is to be let, and a number of farmers apply for it; they are not told, as in England, 'the rent is so much, and we will consider your application, and if we think you are a responsible good tenant you shall have the farm.' 'Good morning, Mr. Smith,' says the land-agent to the farmer, as he walks into his office, 'you have called to see about the farm to let, I understand.' 'Yes, Sir,' says the farmer, 'I should like to take it.' 'Well, what will you give for it, Mr. Smith?' Mr. Smith considers, and at last says what amount of rent he is prepared to pay for it. He is then told to call again in a day or two, and his application shall be considered. Meantime several other farmers call, and are asked in the same way what they will give for the farm, and are also told to call again for an answer to their offers. In a couple of days, Mr. Smith

calls again upon the agent. If Mr. Smith chances to be the most responsible man, and likely to be a good tenant, he is then told, 'We should be very glad to have you as a tenant, Mr. Smith, but there are two or three offers above yours for the farm; here is William Jones offers 10*l.* a-year more than you, and James Evans 20*l.*' Mr. Smith's pride is rather touched, and he says, 'I should like to have the farm, and if Jones and Evans can afford to give 10*l.* and 20*l.* more for it, why I think I can, and will offer 25*l.* more.' 'Very well, Mr. Smith,' says the agent, 'yours is now the highest offer, and we are very happy to have you as a tenant—the farm is yours.' I have before told you that young men just married and anxious to get farms, and men rendered desperate by poverty, who have only the chance before them of one struggle more, or to sink down as labourers, will eagerly bid for a vacant farm even more than it is worth, in order to live. Against such men as these, the more substantial farmer has to compete, and it is evident by the process I have described, that the landlord will succeed in thus extracting from him 25*l.* a-year more than he thought the farm worth. This amount in a farm of 120*l.* or 150*l.* a-year is a great addition of rent. But keenness is not confined to the landlord here; it is a national characteristic, and the tenant has as much aptitude to 'do' the landlord, as the landlord has to 'do' the tenant. The tenant finds out that he has been 'done.' He says nothing till next year,

when in goes the plough into all the best of the land; he gets a wheat crop out of every field that will bear it, and then throws up the farm, with every acre of land in it impoverished, and almost incapable of bearing a crop. Thus this game is carried on. The land, instead of improving, is either at a stand still, or getting worse. The landlord is fitly rewarded for his greediness, and the tenant, instead of gradually becoming a substantial and wealthy farmer, suffers the fate of every 'rolling stone.' Now this is the general practice. In some cases, this same sort of arrangement is come to in a more barefaced and formal manner: the landlord openly advertises his farm to be let by tender, and a formal tender is made by the tenant. I enclose you some public advertisements. The highest tender is not always taken, but it always is, if the party making it is a responsible man, and able to pay. It is only fair to the landlords who pursue this system to say, that the tenants have themselves a good deal to blame for it. I am told it is quite common for them to do that which in England would be thought disgraceful,—go behind each other's backs to the landlord or agent, and say, 'I will give you 10*l.* a-year more for such a farm than the present tenant.' Any man who should do this in England would be spit upon. Here, however, it is all right; it is the character of the people. 'Do me, if you can. I will try my best to "do" you; believe me if you like; you are a fool if you do; I should be

very sorry to believe you.' This seems the universal creed of the people your reporter has now the happiness to dwell amongst."

This is very much in effect the case in Ireland, and when the inevitable arrear comes on, further demands are made in the way of personal service, and further injustice perpetrated. Thus, for instance, the unfortunate tenant is sometimes made to bear all the poor-rate, by a refusal to allow any portion of it, until the last penny of the rent is paid, a circumstance neither probable nor expected.

But good landlordism in Ireland, meets with no check so powerful as that of *ridicule*, those who employ it well knowing that some characters

> "Safe from the Bar, the Pulpit, and the Throne,
> Are touched and turned by ridicule alone."

Does a landlord evince a disposition to let his lands at moderate rents, or to adopt the principle of "*live and let live*," that power, against which few are proof, is immediately set at work. It is endeavoured to laugh him out of his *amiable weakness*, and strong hints are occasionally given by other landlords, that by foolishly giving away his own property, he is indirectly lessening theirs. "Arrah now, my dear lord; by my soul we can get no quarters of *our* tenants, whilst your English agent treats *your* tenants so as to make gentlemen of them all. We shall have some of

your farmers in the commission of the peace, instead of bothering the bench, as they used to do, with their petty squabbles."

The struggle between the wish of a landlord to be popular, and yet to exact all he can, is often ludicrous enough. "Give it to the poor man," said a landlord to his agent; adding, when the poor man was gone, "you needn't do so, nevertheless, you know!" This was overheard by another tenant, who was not perceived to be present, and of course promulgated.

Again, many needy and encumbered landlords of the smaller class find it necessary to secure all the rent they are able, by any means, and indeed to get as much promised as they can; for, although fallacious as to collection, it has the useful effect not only of swelling the rent-roll, and thereby increasing credit, but of placing the tenants in arrear *entirely in the power* of their immediate landlord. *To drive* their cattle to the pound, as the first legal process towards sale, is the "thumbscrew" and the "rack" for those tenants who are in arrear.

Is a landlord of mountain tenantry suddenly seized with an improvement fit, under the conviction that nothing will ever enable the poor tenants to pay their arrear, but *liming* their lands; and are the tenants naturally reluctant, seeing that all the benefit will go to the landlord, and careless of the arrear, seeing that their rents, already too high, might be increased as soon as the lands had felt the

lime;—To make them quarry the limestone, he *drives* their cattle,—*drives* them for drawing it,—*drives* them for building kilns,—*drives* them for saving, and for drawing the turf, and "by the powers," says one of them, "next he'll *drive* us unless we eat it."

The relation of landlord and *agent* also is in Ireland one of almost as much importance to the prosperity of that country, as that of landlord and tenant. Happy is that tenantry whom the landlord has put under the superintendence of a good, *i.e.* an intelligent, honest, honourable, humane, yet zealous and vigilant agent. But where a landlord interferes with such an agent, crosses and checks plans, the remote objects of which he cannot comprehend, listens with eager ears to every tale against him told by those about him, and is led by every casual adviser, rather than by the mature deliberations of his man of business, much of the good is neutralized, and much of bad obtains.

Still worse it is where a landlord will not be seen to oppress, but expects it to be done by his agent, whose unjust acts he condemns in public, but in private applauds, and fancies he is benefited by them. It occurs indeed but too frequently, that sharpness, and even harshness, are considered better qualifications for an agent, than humanity and mildness, with firmness but fair dealing. These functionaries, however, too often avail themselves of a custom "better honoured in the breach than the observance," that of douceurs under the

name of *lease money*, but frequently direct bribes for preference, and even *payment for quiet continuance as yearly tenants.* Does an agent, however, refuse gratuities from the tenants, he is discarded from the confidence of the fraternity, and his *weakness* unfavourably contrasted with the more thrifty deeds of others, while his management is systematically cried down. I may however observe, incidentally, that English agents are greatly preferred by the tenantry of Ireland, on account of their general sense of justice, and fair dealing.

One would think that this custom of gratuities, *alias* bribes, would tend to lower rents; but that is not the case.—The unfortunate tenant agrees to whatever rent is demanded, or offers even more, trusting to the chapter of accidents, and my lord's clemency, or the agent's purchased aid, to shake off arrears, when they occur.

But some landlords under-pay their agents, suffering them tacitly to remunerate themselves by means of this hateful custom. Other landed proprietors, when these practices have been complained of, have replied, that "it is the custom of the country; that they see no harm in it, as tenants expect to comply with the custom," losing sight of the demoralizing effect of the practice, and the reduction of the tenants' means. Wakefield mentions one case, of an English agent, asking the lord of 60,000 acres, if he might comply with this custom;—"Get all you can," was the reply. Often, in fact, 50*l.* to 100*l.* are paid by tenants whose

capital is but little more. Almost every page of the examinations before the assistant commissioners of the Poor-law Inquiry corroborates these facts.

Commissioner Binns says, 1837, "It is usual also in this part of the country (County of Tyrone) for agents to receive money on the signing of leases, the general sum derived from the small tenantry on these occasions being from 5*l.* to 10*l.* As much as 30*l.* or even 50*l.* has been given for the renewal of a lease." And about Inniskillen he says, "It was stated to be the custom here, and a truly disgraceful custom it is, on the signing of a lease, for the agent, his wife, his sister, or his clerk, to receive a compliment in money, equal to about one year's rent." Near Cavan also, he says, "The land agent also gets a compliment of from one to four guineas; four guineas, for instance, on a rent of nine." Of the barony of Inveragh, county Kerry, he says,—"When proprietors *receive their own rents*, they do *not* receive agent's fees in addition, but in signing leases, the agent, or the family of the landlord, often requires compliments to be made."

These facts are not given as insulated instances, for that would prove nothing; but merely as exemplifications of what would almost universally take place, under similar circumstances Such practices on the part of agents, however sanctioned by custom, cannot be too much condemned, and should be abolished, since they impoverish a

tenant, and indeed often take from him almost the entire capital by which he reckoned to stock the farm. Besides, the tenant always looks for some indulgences, often at the landlord's expense, from an agent on whose "itching palm" he has made "the golden cross."—He has retained the very counsel for himself, who has received a general retainer from the landlord, and this incongruity afterwards creates many heartburnings and much confusion.

On the whole, there is no doubt that estates in Ireland are generally much better managed by agents, than they could be by proprietors, but still the good effects of good agencies are subject to many serious drawbacks. Thus for instance, the *collection* is with many the all in all of an Agency. An office is kept open for that purpose, and the tenants drop in daily as they can pick up the cash: no regular audit days, as in England: no handing over the proceeds of the audit in one sum; but a perpetual running account: whilst the *moral* management of tenants is neglected, meaning by moral management, the proper attention to their claims for *justice*, to their general *conduct*, as *tenants*, *citizens*, *farmers*, *masters*, to their *medical* wants, and the like. In the case of relets, as no augmentation of agent's fees takes place, and no respectable valuator, till within a short period, has been usually employed and paid by the landlord, some needy dependent of the office is sent out to rearrange the lands, and choose the new tenants, the highest promised rents, and highest bribes, being the

criteria. Such indeed, may not at this day be the general or most usual mode of proceeding, but it obtains so largely as to give a character to this very important branch of the relation of landlord and tenant, so that it cannot be denied, that the augmentation of the rent-roll, however pernicious or improvident that may be, is the usual criterion of good agency; and the mode by which the agent seeks to recommend himself to his employer.

The fact of too high rents, arising from these and other causes, having long prevailed, especially in the province of Munster, is too notorious to admit of doubt, and the mischiefs arising out of this circumstance are manifold and grievous. The tenant is held in a state of hopeless bondage, in debt, distress, despondency, and discontent, forced to regard his immediate landlord as his oppressor, unable to improve his land, or to provide suitably for his family, and at all times ready to listen to the most improbable suggestions of bettering his condition, or to try the wildest schemes for emancipation from his thraldom.

It is very true that this state of things is not universal, that many estates are let "for their value," or at moderate rents; and yet, that the tenants of those estates are not prosperous in proportion to the difference, nor do they exhibit much of that thrift and cleanliness, for which the English are so remarkable, nor do they accumulate capital, like that people.

But the mode of living most usual amongst any

class of people, in any country, will extend more or less throughout the whole of that class, whatever may be the difference of condition; so that the unthrifty many will control or regulate the habits of the thrifty few, and until the majority be prosperous, all will appear to be miserable.

We hold, that the capital of the English farmer was accumulated during a long course of rising times, with low, or at least very moderate rents, secured to them by leases; and although we have no longer the rising times in Ireland, we have increased facilities for improvements, almost an unbounded field for them; and by leases at moderate rents, and with "encouraging" arrangements, the produce of land may be so increased, as to *accumulate capital* to the occupier. In many cases it has done so during the high war prices, but the want of those strict stipulations which were adopted in England, as to the *mode of occupation*, admitted in Ireland of these successful improving tenants becoming middlemen, and thus extending the high rents and the miseries of Irish occupants. It must indeed be remembered, that the accumulation of capital amongst the English farmers, by the means above mentioned, chiefly took place whilst an absorbing attention to manufactures occupied the rich, and diverted their attention from the land, which, about the end of the American war, was so greatly depressed, that I have in several instances, sold more timber from estates then purchased, than would pay their first cost, still

leaving an abundant plant. But, during the revolutionary war, land advanced rapidly in value.

No such good fortune now awaits the tenantry of Ireland, as to become capitalists suddenly; but it is sufficiently evident, that the natural resources of that country readily admit of a far greater share of prosperity and comfort to *all* its inhabitants, than they enjoy at present.

By too high rents, I mean too large a portion of the *saleable produce of the soil*, after the daily sustenance of the family of the occupier, and seed for the next crop are provided for. Sustenance for the occupier's family!—Think not, ye too generous English landlords, that this means sustenance in the English acceptation of the word. No,—it means potatoes, and, if the rent afford it, sour milk for two meals a day, that being the most usual and indeed the almost universal diet of the occupying tenant in the south of Ireland. This sustenance, however, is often barely left to him, as the result of his toil, his cares, his hazards, and anxieties, which, though generally on a small scale as to property and capital, are *to him* as great and important as those of larger occupants, with a larger stake.

This is all the prevalent too high rents afford to the occupying tenant, who often finds it absolutely necessary to qualify this meagre diet with "a drink," *i. e.* a glass of whisky; and in a damp and inclement climate, with care and toil, I hold such moderate qualification to be absolutely and indispensably requisite to health and strength, and I

believe that it must be again resorted to; although the total abolition has been necessary to produce that extraordinary success which has attended the benign efforts of one individual, in the gigantic attempt to extinguish a *once* national vice.—*En passant*, I also hold that the best way to prevent this vice from again taking root amongst the poorer classes, is to place, by duties, the price above their reach in immoderate quantities. I would put ten shillings per gallon on whisky at once, and put down illicit distillation, not by hunting stills, but by legal severities on those who purchased or possessed their produce. This was the way smuggling was put down on the eastern coasts of England. Such a duty might have the effect of promoting the consumption of beer amongst the population of Ireland.

I consider, indeed, that the diet of the Irish farmer and peasantry is degradingly low, and so calculated to repress the energies of their character as to account in some measure for the backwardness of the country in cultivation, and the want of that constant activity of mind which prompts to individual enterprise, to ingenious mechanical devices,—and to the progress of those manufactures, which there are capitalists enough to establish, if the genius of the people were favourable to their success. But the poor food of the Irish induces diseases also, which are destructive of energy, particularly dyspepsia, flatulency, low fevers, and the like.

On the converse of the proposition Dr. Riadore,

in his excellent Essay on Spinal and Nervous Affections, says—"The history of the habits of the higher classes in olden times, both in England and France, contradicts this general impression (*i. e.* of the mischiefs of good living). In France, the higher classes lived far more sumptuously and refined in their cooking, about two hundred years ago, than they even do now; yet indigestion was not a subject treated upon by medical writers in those days, by either the French or the English; when in the good days of Queen Bess, the viands partaken of by her noble and gentle subjects, were just the reverse of what was customary with the French gentry; for instead of refined stews, they were of the most substantial character; for instance, the allowance to each of her maids of honour for breakfast, was 'two pounds of beef steak and two quarts of strong ale;' this being the commencement of their daily business; her majesty having occasion now and then 'to box their ears' in the after part of the day, might have been excused rather than severely commented upon by our modern biographers. In the present day, unquestionably the most *recherché* dinners are not found, as formerly, amongst the French nobility, but amongst the wealthy inhabitants of England. Who can deny that in our late war, our gentry have not endured the toils of the active field of war, as vigorously, and as harmlessly in constitution, as any of their less indulged companions; and it is

well known that the French officers sustained better than their men the fatigue of the disastrous retreat of the army from Moscow. Again, now in time of peace, none can surpass the English gentry in the active and arduous pursuits of field sports, or in the application of their energies to science and literature. In short, it appears that the strongest and most healthy people, and least subject to indigestion, &c., are those who live upon the most nutritious and palatable food, and are agreeably and actively employed, and subject to less anxieties."

In Lewis and Clarke's travels in America, to explore 4,000 miles of new country, the fact is recorded that the party were healthy only in proportion to their supply of animal food, and in fine it cannot be denied that the low food of the Irish is greatly against their individual and national prosperity. All medical men in the army and navy bear testimony to the increased serviceability of men after a few weeks of substantial food, such as the service affords.

The time will assuredly come, when the English mode of living will prevail in Ireland, and potatoes be regarded as auxiliaries to, not substitutes for, beef and mutton, and this upon economical principles, the smaller quantity of heartier food making up for its greater value; then also the tenant would become more enterprising, and labour be cheaper, because more effectual; then also less of

the land would be cultivated for subsistence, and more for rent.

I now proceed to show that rents in Ireland *are too high*, in comparison with those of England, i.e. *in proportion* to the value of the *produce of the land.*

In England, the share of produce fairly exacted from the tenant for his occupation of arable, *i.e.* tillage land, (for the term arable has a different meaning in the two countries; in Ireland denoting all useful or *culturable* land, in England land in *tillage* only,) is from *one-fourth* for soils of average quality, to *one-sixth* for those which yield badly, and are hard to work or heavily burthened. This however is the proportion of *gross* produce, *i.e.* of the value of the whole of those crops, and of that stock, which by *reasonably good management* may be made to "grow and arise" from the farm in the course of the year. The rent of grass land is about two-fifths of the produce for rich grazing land, and one-third for meadow or dairy lands. This also is of *gross* produce. Farms of a mixed nature, comprising from one-third to one-half grass land, which are the most usual in England, yield in general a rent exceeding one-fourth of the value of *gross* produce in proportion to the quantity of grass land, the remainder going to defray the public burthens, the labour required, the stock, implements and manure to be purchased, and the farmer's living, and profit on his capital, time and skill.

But here it is necessary to make a marked distinction between the *gross* and the *saleable* produce of land. The former is explained aforegoing: by the latter is meant that portion of the produce which remains at the farmer's disposal, after feeding the cattle on his farm, and taking seed for the land; the sale of this remainder being the fund which he raises for the purpose of carrying on another year's farming, and maintaining his family. This fund will generally amount to full three times the rent, in cases of mixed arable, *i.e.* tillage and grass land, and where it does so, the rent will be about one-third of the saleable produce of the farm, but in cases requiring considerable outlay in improvements, the rent will be about two-sevenths of the saleable produce, or the tenant will be said to make three-and-a-half rents.

Now, in the south of Ireland, the rent exacted is often nearly the *whole* value of the principal *saleable* produce, *e.g.* of the butter made on a dairy farm, leaving the public burthens, and the other ready money expenses to be defrayed by pigs, young cattle, goats, or such extra tillage, extra prices, or such good luck as may chance to happen, and be rendered available to that object. Even those reckoned *reasonable* landlords in the country will calculate the utmost value of what can be *sold* off the farm, and after allowing for public burthens payable thereout, will exact the remainder as rent.

Thus, if we take the money capable of being raised, from the sale of a year's produce of a farm in Munster, after the family have been fed on potatoes, &c. at £150

And take the public burthens, the county charges—the rent charge—the priest's dues—the poor-rate—and also sundry other ready money expenses of the family at 50

It leaves balance for rent £100

which, in some districts, would be thought so reasonable, that the landlord letting his lands at this rate would be reckoned amongst the worthies of the day, in taking but *two-thirds* of saleable produce, when the English landlord takes but *one-third*, making a difference of about double, in Ireland, of the rents of England. I am clearly of opinion that the rent of land in Munster, *ceteris paribus*, generally, and in other provinces partially, is *about or nearly double*, perhaps eighty per cent. above that of England, in proportion to its *saleable* produce.

Primate Boulter says, "Here the tenant, I fear, has hardly ever more than one-third for his share, and too often but a fourth or a fifth part."—(See Sadler's Ireland, p. 49.)

Many of the Baronial Examinations of the Poor Law Inquiry Commissioners also mention extravagant rents; but one witness says, "In the case of a small holding, the landlord positively

receives nine-tenths of the value of whatever is produced upon it." (Co. Leitrim.) Another says, that, "If the *gross* produce is 200*l.* value, the rent will be 100*l.*" (Co. Dublin.) One-half *gross* produce on larger farms; on small farms all the produce except taxes and a bare subsistence. (Co. Meath.) Nothing left but bare subsistence. (Queen's Co.)

All complain of rents being by the acre, and roads and rivers being measured to them, making a difference sometimes of two acres in twelve.

It is not so in a large portion of Ulster, where the benign influence of those best of landlords, THE LONDON COMPANIES, has established a better footing in all respects between landlord and tenant, and where rents approach near in proportion to produce to those of England; although the example thus given to the resident gentry has scarcely been long enough in force to influence greatly the general rents of the north.

That the consequences of nearly doubling the present English rent of land, were that possible, would be the rapid reduction of the English tenantry to a similar state with the tenantry of Ireland, there can be no doubt.

Greatly to reduce the rents of Ireland, at once, would be equally impossible; but I shall presently show that there are feasible and practicable means, by which all may be set right without any such injurious alternatives.

In every case of excessive rents throughout Ireland, the landlord is justly doomed to share in

the privations which he inflicts upon his tenant; for if he exacts so much in rent, that his tenant has less than his due and fair share of enjoyment, his tenant is also deprived of the means of improving the estate: he is reluctant to pay, and his rent difficult to recover, often lost altogether, and never satisfactorily liquidated: dilapidation and exhaustion succeed to arrear; expenses of distraint and ejectment greatly reduce the sums actually received, and the rapacious landlord often obtains less in *net ready money* than he who is moderate.

In the mean time, the oppressed tenant oppresses *his* dependants, charging his wretched labourer two pounds for *a rood* of poor land, which is paid for partly by the pig, and partly by labour, at from sixpence to ninepence per day. Sometimes the rent of a farm, however high, is thus nearly paid by a *stock of human kind.* The miserable pauper is *thus* permitted to plant his potatoes and his family on a mountain side, and the tenant shows the agent *his improvements.*

These facts are plain enough to all who are conversant with the subject. It may then fairly be asked, how is it that these exorbitant rents are so frequent, seeing that they are contrary to good policy? In England, the policy of fairly proportioning rents to produce is so strongly felt, that I have known 800*l.* per annum accepted, where 1,200*l.* has been offered. But why not so in Ireland? I reply, because of the peculiarities of the Irish character, which, even amongst educated persons, has not yet arrived at that degree of

refinement in civilization, which teaches us that the half *may in some cases* be better than the whole. Few of any grade amongst the landed interest in that country have yet learned the greatest *art of business*; viz. *when* to *give way*, and when *to insist*. After a study of above thirty years, with an enthusiastic admiration of the Irish character *generally*, for their activity of mind and body, warmth of heart, and manly bearing, I have settled down into the conclusion, that, in matters of business, the character is yet in a state of inchoate civilization.

If, however, this disease of too high rents is so deeply rooted in the constitution of Irish landlords, that no state physician will undertake its eradication, then it is only in the *true policy* being adopted by the landlords themselves, that the *true remedy* can be found to the full extent which the prosperity of the country, and the well-being of the landlords themselves, require. What that true policy is, I hope to make irrefragably clear in the sequel, although I much fear that those to whom it is addressed will be "like the deaf adder that stoppeth her ears."

Methinks I hear an Irish gentleman exclaim: "Am I to be told that *two* pounds an acre are *better* than *four?* As well might it be preached, that two are *more* than four!" But, my dear sir, consider for a moment. If the four pounds per acre impoverish your tenant, so that, in a short time, he cannot pay even two pounds per acre; if the four pounds per acre necessarily oblige him

to impoverish the land, to let down the fences, and to neglect the buildings, so that your land, after a large arrear, and expenses of ejectment, must be relet at thirty shillings per acre; then you had better have taken but two pounds an acre at first, under which ample rent your tenant might have been able to improve your land and premises, and have enabled you to relet it, at the end of his lease, at fifty shillings per acre. So that nothing can be more certainly good policy in a landlord than the avoidance of too high rents. We cannot too much impress on landlords and agents the importance of the maxim: "RICH TENANTS MAKE RICH LANDLORDS;" of course meaning by riches, enough to pay their way and something to spare, however small. Every agent knows the advantages of having tenants possessed of this kind of riches. The rent is paid, the lands are improved, and the landlord, the agent, and the tenant are satisfied. But when rack-rent induces poverty, as it very soon does, the consequences are destruction to the land, misery to the tenant, vexation to the agent, and disappointment, loss, and annoyance to the landlord. What a difference! Then why are too high rents prevalent? Because the maxim of "grasp all, lose all," is not remembered.

I do not mean to advocate too low rents, which are almost equally injurious as too high, because they encourage supineness, and render exertion almost unnecessary. The just and best medium consists in such annual payments as will enable a tenant to meet the demands of the agent and others

at their *regular* periods; to live decently and comfortably; and store up something for his family; and yet the rent high enough to make industry and perseverance absolutely necessary to effect these objects.

To ascertain such a rent, it is requisite to state a debtor and creditor account of what can fairly be sold off the farm, and what *must be* provided for out of it; the remainder is fair rent, crediting the farm with the value of the labour of the family thereon, which, even if they *can live* without it, at least ought to constitute the saving fund to assist the children in the world. Some such statements, for instance, as the following might be adopted, but of course subject to modification by the principle *mutatis mutandis;* and these statements being considered as mere abridgements of actual valuations, in order to convey a general idea of their character.

1st. Medium Land in a Dairy District.

A Farm of 50 acres, sound land, besides 10 dry cattle on bog and mountain.

Dr.

To 12 cows—	£	s.	d.
1 cwt. butter per cow, at 60*s.*	36	0	0
10 acres tillage, viz.—			
2½ acres potatoes, consumed.			
2½ do. oats, 40 bushels at 2*s.* 6*d.* say .	12	0	0
2½ do. grass, natural, consumed.			
2½ do. grass do. do.			
Mountain dry cattle	5	0	0
Pigs and sundries, say	17	0	0
	£70	0	0

Cr.	£	*s.*	*d.*
By County Cess			
Rent-charge	5	5	0
Half Poor-rate			
Labour to 5 acres	7	10	0
Living and clothes	8	15	3
	21	10	3
Rent	48	9	9
	£70	0	0

But such land is usually charged in Ireland without allowance for labour or living, small as those items are here set down.

2d. Good Corn Land—20 acres.

Dr.	£	*s.*	*d.*
To 4 acres potatoes, consumed.			
4 do. wheat, 4 qrs. per acre, 32 bushels, at 6*s.* say	40	0	0
4 do. oats, 6 qrs. or 48 bushels, at 2*s.*6*d.*	24	0	0
4 do. seeds mown, consumed.			
4 do. ley fed, do.			
Pigs and cow, &c. say	14	0	0
	£78	0	0

Cr.	£	*s.*	*d.*
By County Cess			
Rent-charge	6	0	0
Half Poor-rate			
Labour on 12 acres	18	0	0
Living, clothes, &c.	10	0	0
Horse, implements, &c.	7	10	0
	41	10	0
Rent	36	10	0
	£78	0	0

Such land in Ireland is usually rented from 40*s.* to 50*s.* per Irish acre of 1A. 2R. 9P., the items of labour, living, and horse, being omitted.

3d. MEDIUM FLAX LAND—21 ACRES.

Dr.	£	*s.*	*d.*
To 3 acres potatoes, consumed.			
3 do. oats; 40 bushels at 2*s.* 6*d.* . . .	15	0	0
3 do. flax	30	0	0
3 do. oats	15	0	0
3 do. seeds mown, consumed.			
3 do. seeds fed, ditto.			
3 do. seeds fed ditto.			
Pigs, cow, &c. say	10	0	0
	£70	0	0

Cr.	£	*s.*	*d.*
By County Cess			
Rent-charge	5	5	0
Half poor-rate			
Labour on 15 acres	22	10	0
Living, &c.	8	15	3
Horse, &c. &c.	5	0	0
	41	10	3
Rent	28	9	9
	£70	0	0

And such lands in the north are usually let at 35*s.* to 45*s.* per Cunningham acre of 1A. 1R. 6P. Those who leave out the items of labour, living, and horse, will of course have very high rents.

4th. Exhausted Tillage, 10 acres, Co. Sligo.

Dr.	£	*s.*	*d.*
To 2 acres potatoes, consumed.			
2 do. oats	15	0	0
2 do. oats, part consumed . . . . . part flax. consumed.			
2 do. grass, ditto.			
2 do. ley, ditto.			
Cow, pig, poultry, eggs, &c.	5	0	0
	£20	0	0

Cr.	£	*s.*	*d.*
By County Cess, 4*s.* per acre	2	0	0
Half poor-rate	0	10	0
Labour on 6 acres	9	0	0
Family expenses	3	10	0
	15	0	0
Rent	5	0	0
	£20	0	0

But the rent usually charged is 40*s.* to 50*s.* per acre of 1A. 1R. 6P.—(*See* Binns.)

In the above statements I have taken, on the debtor side, the medium produce and value of corn, &c.; but the item of pigs, &c., including poultry, eggs, and profit by cottars, is somewhat arbitrary. They have often hitherto, on a dairy farm, paid a gale (half year's) rent, but are now far within that value. They depend, however, greatly on the breadth and produce of potatoes, and are here rather over than understated. On the creditor side, the taxes are taken at 20 per cent. on one-third produce, which is rather what it

ought to be than what it is. The manual labour on the land in tillage is taken at 30*s.* per acre, as in England, where each horse and its concomitant trade expenses cost 10*l.* a-year; but we take half this, viz. 5*l.* In England, a farmer cannot afford to spend in the maintenance of his family more than one-fourth of his saleable produce; for Ireland we take half this ratio, or one-eighth, because of the potatoes consumed. The fairness of these ratios will be self-evident.

This definition, or mode of calculation, of a fair and moderate rent is perhaps sufficient where a farm is already fenced and cultivated; but, in all cases of coarse land in a backward country, the experience of more than thirty years teaches me, that not only must rents be high enough to stimulate exertion, and yet low enough to admit of payment, but that more is requisite, viz. the encouragement of leases, containing obligations on both parties to improve the lands, joined to the assistance and superintendence of the landlord by his agents.

The idea has been suggested of regulating Irish rents by reference to the prices of produce. This method has been practised in England, under the name of a "Corn Rent;" but it is found to be much less useful in practice, than it seems equitable in theory, since it sometimes requires the farmer to pay most money when he has the least to pay with; as, for instance, when corn is high in consequence of a failure in the crop. In other cases, it has the reverse effect; as, when corn is low in con-

sequence of a great crop. Again, the averages may be low, in consequence of blights and mildews occasioning a portion of the crop to come to market at low prices, whilst the bulk of the crop may sell high. Again, the difficulties of framing such a clause in a lease with sufficient clearness, and yet sufficient effect, are almost insuperable; and the difficulties of acting on such a clause, when framed to mutual satisfaction, are equally great, because the averages may be easily disputed.

And if a wheat rent, why not an oat rent, a butter rent, a beef rent, a flax rent, or even a potatoe rent, that crop being so prevalent, that one sees potatoes in Ireland, as we see turnips in Norfolk? Nothing but that mutual good understanding which should exist between landlord and tenant, and usually does exist in England, can bring such a clause and such a rent into "working order." Any other feeling between those two parties would make it "a bone of contention," and an Irish tenant would have a *new* "plea" for delaying payment, since he would never be convinced of what he had to pay, and the difficulty of collection would increase tenfold. In Ireland, also, the small tenant consumes so large a portion of his produce, which to him is therefore equally valuable every year, that the reference to the price of produce seems scarcely applicable; nevertheless, a general reference to the price of corn on the average of years, has answered well in some of the corn districts of England.

The Metayer system of the landlord and tenant

sharing the annual produce in kind, would be too great a departure from established practices, and in my opinion there is nothing so good as a moderate portion of the value of the saleable produce to be paid in money as a fixed rent.

Rents are also too high in Ireland, because the strong hold on the tenant, acquired by the landlord during the high prices of the war, when he could pay very high rents, is too flattering to the itch for power and domination, to be easily relaxed. On this point it must indeed be confessed, that the constant tumults of the tenantry, or what is now genteelized by the name of "agitation," much facilitated landlords obtaining their great powers; for every resistance to existing laws was followed by new laws to enforce obedience.

And because those who would in their own persons shrink from making exorbitant demands, readily connive at its being done by their agents, on their behalf; although it is evident that the law maxim, of "what we do by another, we do ourselves" applies with peculiar force to transactions between landlord and tenant.

It must, however, be admitted, that although too high rents are still prevalent over a large portion of Ireland, they are less so than formerly, *i. e.* during the revolutionary war. The high prices of that period rendered the competition for land quite inordinate. *All* lands out of lease were then let by tender or "proposal," *i. e.* to the *highest bidder*, and an assurance was generally advertised

that "no promise of preference had been or would be given," meaning, that the tenants in possession were not considered as entitled to renewal, unless they offered most. The miseries consequent on the dispossession of tenants at that period are dreadful to contemplate, even at this distance of time, and although few such enormities of inhumanity are now perpetrated for "base lucre" alone, yet it is doubtless greatly owing to them, as part of that derangement of the relation between landlord and tenant which has so long prevailed, that the country is still suffering under the evils of discontent and agitation, to an extent which, though it may not shake the empire, will at least affect the social system of Ireland for a century to come, by the rankling which will remain after the extinction of dangerous fire.

But let us ask ourselves, what *can* the Government do towards the abolition of too high rents at present, or the prevention of them in future? This, it may said, is a mode of dealing with property, and a matter of contract between landlord and tenant, which it would be an undue interference with property, to attempt to control; that every one knows his own interest best; that it cannot be supposed landlords would be so ignorant of their true interests, as to exact so much rent as to impoverish their tenants, and so "cut up the goose with the golden egg;" that, although some landlords might so act, it cannot be supposed that the general mass of landlords would so far lose sight of good policy;

and that, if it be so at the present moment, contrary to all probability, the time cannot be far distant, in this enlightened age, when all evils of too high rents will disappear as new lettings take place.

This, we fear, must be taken as the answer *likely* to be given to the question: What can Government do? But such an answer will be open to the rejoinder: Look at the facts: they are known, recognised, and condemned by all the world; they are such as call aloud, not for reasoning, but for remedy. And, though Government may find it difficult to adopt a remedy by *direct* interference with the terms on which the landlord and tenant may deal with each other; though scarcely any Government can indeed afford to interfere directly with the revenues of the aristocracy, except in the way of taxation; even such interference was not ventured on in the late Government experiment of ruling *by* and *for* the *democracy*, except in the case of the Church, which had many enemies, while its friends were powerless. Yet Government may adopt measures of *indirect* interference, which may have a *tendency* to restrain, if not entirely stay the landlord's inordinate appetite for rent. It has, indeed, already recognised and acted on this principle, in the Ordnance valuation for the County Cess, and in making some matters relative to the franchise referable thereto. In levying the Poor-rate also, it is acted on, but the principle may probably be carried to much further extent.

The mention of those taxes which are paid by

tenants, reminds us that it is not high rents only of which the poorer class of occupying tenants have to complain; for, as Southey says,

> "Long, long labour, little rest,
> Still to toil, to be oppressed;
> Drained by taxes of his store,
> Punished next for being poor,
> This is the poor wretch's lot,
> Born within the straw-roofed cot."

The *public burthens* also connected with rent, are too high *on them;* for instance:—

The County Cess, in some parts of the kingdom, where the Ordnance survey has not yet been accomplished, ranges from 10 to 25 per cent. on small holdings, the applotments varying in a compound ratio of the facility of collection, the local power of the landlord, and the connexion or intimacy between the payers and payees. Indeed, there still exists some remnant of the system under which the old hearth-tax was collected, viz. charging parishes that *could* be made to pay, with the amount due of those parishes that *would not* pay.

The enormous amount of the County Cess is a matter of great complaint amongst the occupying tenantry of Ireland. The whole of it is levied *on them;* and grand juries, composed of men of landed property, are universally considered to exercise their powers with very little regard to the pockets of the tenantry, already burthened as they are with high rents. But this is putting the case too mildly. It really stands thus:—That, whatever

heartburnings and ranklings may exist on the score of too high rents, such feelings are sorely aggravated by the fact, that as prices fall and times get worse, as the means of paying rents decrease, the very landlords who are to receive those rents voluntarily increase the public burthens of their tenants by new roads and works, which might, at least, await the advent of better times, if not be altogether let alone. I have recently seen two "new lines," of several miles in length, going on to the same place, and that a small and remote one, these lines, on each side of the same river, being parallel to and in sight of each other.

It is the fact, that new lines of road, in great number and extent, have been for some years, and still are making in every county; and that the formation of new lines seems for some reason to be preferred to the due repair of the old, which strikes the country people as an undue pressure on the rate-payers. But they do not know, or do not recollect, that grand juries have nearly half the "county cut" to levy for fiscal purposes over which they have no control. Nor do they give those juries due credit for their anxiety to employ the people, and to improve the communication throughout the country; objects, by-the-bye, which, however important, they would deserve more credit for promoting, if at their their own expense, instead of that of their already over-burthened tenantry.

In fact, there is nothing in the local government

of Ireland, which requires putting on an entirely new system, so much as the grand jury business relating to public works. It is true, that the grand jury laws have been somewhat altered, but not effectually. A badly paid surveyor has been appointed to each county, who has from 1,500 to 2,000 miles of roads and innumerable bridges to regulate, paying his own travelling expenses out of 300*l.* or 400*l.* a-year, and who must be *more than man* not to fall in with most of the plans of those amongst whom he resides and becomes connected, and is caressed as the medium of getting good things, or at least as one without whom they cannot be obtained. Besides, the qualifications of a county surveyor being those of an engineer, he is naturally led to promote *greater* works than that of "darning" old roads.

Doubtless also, the establishment of Road Sessions was intended to give the rate-payers a voice in the taxation of themselves; but this arrangement was evidently made without adverting to (perhaps in ignorance of) the actual state of the relation between landlord and tenant; and without recollecting, that the *very look* of an influential agent will *dare* the tenants present to vote against any presentment which *he* favours, and that such agent will often nominate, on Road Sessions, small holders under his command, though paying but a few shillings cess to the exclusion of those who pay several pounds.

Commissioner Binns, says:—"That south of

Cavan, the Grand Jury Cess ranges from 4*s.* to 6*s.* a-year per acre, is considered exceedingly unequal and oppressive, and is bitterly complained of by every body;" and yet all but the mail roads are very bad. In the Barony of Lower Iveagh, County Down, "the sum to be levied on each townland is the same for every acre of the townland, so that a poor farm, with rocks and other waste land, pays as much per acre as a good farm without any waste."

About and north-west of Sligo, he says, it averages more than 4*s.* per acre, and is very unequally and oppressively assessed, as well as collected. "The applotters," he says, in part of one barony "collected for 300 or 400 acres more than that portion of the barony was assessed at, and pocketed the money." About Galway, he says, "The people pay at the rate of one-fifth of their rent for cess, and do not know how it is applied. This is a state of things that calls loudly for reform." In the Barony of Carbury, County Sligo, the commissioners, 1836, report the following collections to have been made for County Cess on 21,431 acres, viz.:—

	s.	*d.*	
1832-3	3	10	per acre.
1833-4	3	8¾	„
1834-5	4	11¾	„

There is also good reason to know that in some counties the state of accounts for the application of County Cess is very unsatisfactory; and that a "glorious confusion" exists as to the accounts

between the Board of Works and the county, and between the treasurers and the county. A printed and published finance Report for one county in the South is now before me. The following are extracts:—"The treasurer states (that) no account current has ever been kept by this county through which this committee can ascertain the receipts from the Board of Works, and the mode in which repayments have been made." And the following sums seem to the committee to have been levied for the payment of debt and interest to the Board of Works, *after* the repayment of such debt and interest had been fully made and completed, viz. twelve sums, of which the lowest is 20*l.* 11*s.* 5*d.*, and the highest is 314*l.* 18*s.* 6*d.*, amounting to 1669*l.* 11*s.* 4*d.*; the Report ending with the recommendation to employ a *proper* accountant to find how matters really stand.

Thus every attempt to lessen corruption has increased it in another shape, and whilst cutting off one hydra-head, another sprouts out. Add to all these charges on the tenant the usual payments to his own clergy, and the additional payments for building a cathedral in each diocese,—a new chapel in each parish,—catholic rent,—O'Connell tribute-money,—repeal rent,—and "the Lord knows what," besides gratuities to agents, and it is only wonderful how the poor farmer can live at all!

If, however, I merely made the complaint, without undertaking the much more difficult task of suggesting a remedy, I should imitate what all

condemn; viz. the conduct of those Irish members, in Parliament, who are incessantly calling for "Justice to Ireland," without pointing out in what that consists. I propose, therefore, to divide the *fiscal* from the *road* presentments, in order that the grand jury may not have more odium than they needs must in the eyes of the rate-payers; to let all *new* roads be determined and made, and bridges built, by the Ordnance or other public board, and that the counties or parts of counties be taxed by them through which the roads pass, or may be useful; and to let the repair of the ordinary roads be done by the parishes, as in England. This mode ensures a fair chance of assistance to every estate; whereas, estates not directly represented on the grand jury are deprived of any benefit from the existing mode of obtaining roads, and their repairs. One estate, which pays above 500*l.* a-year to the county cess, not being directly represented on the grand jury, has, for thirty years, been denied the smallest assistance for repair of its roads; although the proprietor has during that period made above thirty miles of new road for his tenants and the public, at his own expense; whilst other landlords in the county have got roads made to their quarries, and other roads over their estates, within gunshot of each other, by *presentment*,—a mode still liable to many objections, though somewhat shorn of the glaring abuses by which it was once distinguished.

One thing is devoutly to be wished, viz. that

Government would exonerate counties from payment of the cost of the survey and valuation of Ireland, and of any such in future, as these are public government measures, and should be a government expense, of which the county cess-payers should be relieved, however otherwise it may be provided for.

The rent-charge, in lieu of tithes, is perhaps one of the most successful abatements of a social evil ever effected in Ireland. I well remember the evil of tithes at its height; the proctor going out to value the tenth of the poor man's patch of potatoes, oats, and flax; the poor man neglecting, or unable to pay the few shillings charged; these augmented to pounds by law proceedings; the next year's tithe doubled, in consequence of non-payment of the first; more law proceedings, stamps on notes of hand, &c. &c., augmenting the dues to the proctor, who put securities in force, and who, having "canted" the poor man's only cow, was *shot* in the field, and the poor man *hanged*. Now, however, the rent-charge has been commuted into a money payment, much nearer to a twentieth than a tenth of the produce, and this *payable by the landlord*, on any lettings made since this measure was adopted.

But, beneficial as has been the working of this measure so far as regarded the tranquillization of the popular mind, it is, in other respects, an exceedingly imperfect measure, since it *fixes* for ever elements of value in their nature fluctuating,

and it provides a *fixed* income for labours and for services that may and must in many cases gradually *increase* to a fivefold extent. It also *exempts* lands from future tithe, merely because they happen to be now in a state of waste, as it is called, but really in the same state that all lands have once been in. Instead of this, the commutation of each parish should have been revised at stated periods, say of twenty-one years, and as culture and population increased, so should the provision for the clergy. But as this Act, like many others relating to Ireland, passed under the influence of "the pressure from without," the object was to "merge" the *name* of tithes. Here, we may exclaim:—"With how little wisdom is the world governed!"

The Poor-law was a grand and glorious measure to achieve, but the poor-rate is at present felt as a great grievance in Ireland generally, on the ground that so large a portion of it goes to the staff, or officers, and to the support of Union-houses, leaving what is considered but a small share of the rate applicable to the actual relief of the poor, who themselves also prefer mendicity to the *discipline* of the *house*. The general opinion fixes this staff-share of expense at eightpence or ninepence out of every shilling, but this, to correspond with fact, should be reversed, and the larger sum set down as appropriated to the poor. Still, it must be confessed, that in a *poor country* these large and expensive establishments do absorb a

greater proportion of the whole rate collected than in a richer country; and although highly advantageous in England, where local Union-houses had already been in operation, and the system well known, and where something was wanted as a general alterative, after nearly 250 years of complicated abuses of the wise law of 43 Eliz., yet, to commence with these in Ireland, under such very different circumstances, was probably a mistake, unless they were also intended to serve as barracks in case of popular commotions. It is certain that they have at present a strong tendency to become mere *hospitals*.

It would, perhaps, have been better to have levied a small rate on the landlords, to be vested in trustees, and applicable only to the extremest cases, and to the periodical visitations of fever or of famine which occur in Ireland, from the poverty or failure of its food. This would have served for a beginning, whilst time and experience would have suggested gradual amendments. In England not less than 120 enactments have failed to perfect the poor-laws; and it was too much to expect perfection, from one law in Ireland, although attended with the immediate expenditure of about 1,500,000*l.* sterling, and a tax of 5 to 7 per cent. on the whole valued rental of Ireland.

Whether it will be wise to revert to the simple mode of a poor-law just mentioned, or to persevere in the present plan, however distasteful *at first* to the country, must depend on circumstances now in

embryo, but about to develop themselves for legislative consideration.

In England, to avoid relief out of the workhouse has been constantly aimed at, but never yet attained; and I am not sure whether in Ireland it would not be best to allow the present Union-houses to become infirmaries, and to institute such a fund as I have mentioned for outdoor relief.

Although the multiplication of rates be objectionable, yet I would advocate a special rate on the owners and occupiers of the soil in each parish, for the purpose of assisting *resident* indigence, *until* the cases should *necessarily* go to the Union-house. This fund should be vested in a visiting committee, and not more than nine-tenths of it should be spent in any one year. I cannot but consider it as a great misfortune, that the parochial system was so much laid aside in the arrangement of a poor-law, and that the wisdom of this day was so much preferred to "the wisdom of our ancestors." With officers corresponding to the overseers of England, and these controlled by a vestry, many regulations might be made in parishes, and the vestry might be answerable to a Board of Guardians. But the beautiful simplicity of the law of Elizabeth, that the parish officers "should take order to set the poor on work," was too little appreciated, and too much departed from, in this great measure. The abolition of mendicity will necessarily come on, as soon as the whole of the Union-houses are opened; and this will strike at the root of one of the mer-

riest and most flourishing occupations in Ireland, and so give umbrage to a large body, whose minds are perhaps already rankling under the pains and penalties of dispossession for nonpayment of too high rents, and whose employment and "diversion" it is to spread discontent, and to convey intelligence to the remotest spots, and that with a rapidity only equalled by the "burning brand" of old. Commissioner Binns says: "We were informed by one of the witnesses, that he knew a beggar who said he could give his daughter 30*l.*; another beggar had several sums of money out at interest. In rough weather, they frequently stay with the labourers and small farmers for a few days or a week, and amuse the family over the fire, sometimes till three o'clock in the morning, with news and tales of their adventures. They carry disease from house to house, and corrupt the morals of the children." About Philipstown, he says, the beggars are very numerous, and three or four hundred of them pass through the town in a day, "often tipsy, and circulate stories of a malicious tendency. They shut up their houses, gamble at cock-fights, and occasionally amass, by one means or another, considerable wealth." One instance is mentioned of "a beggar who gave his daughter 100*l.*" The abolition of mendicity will lead to the law of settlement, that fruitful source of litigation, which has fattened many a lawyer, and starved many a pauper.

Under these circumstances of burthen and discontent, it is worthy of consideration, whether the

Irish tenant could not be advantageously brought into a situation similar to that of the tenants in Scotland, with respect to all outgoings in the nature of public burthens, which are there paid by the heritor or his factor, although the tenant's rent is augmented, but in a somewhat lower proportion. This is a mode which was adopted in the backward state of agriculture in that country, and it seems to have answered well; as not only have the tenantry of a similar mountain region to Ireland been contented under it, ever since the Union, but a large portion of them have taken the lead in agriculture, and have outstripped their teachers. I cannot conceive any thing, in fact, better adapted to Ireland, than the system that has worked so well and for so long a period in Scotland, a country which in many respects resembles Ireland, as well in its mountainous character, and in the peculiarities which that character of country induces in the nature of the people, as in the backward state of that people and country at the period when the system was established. I consider also, that their present forward state, morally and intellectually, as well as agriculturally, is some proof—nay, a powerful proof, of the beneficial effects of that system upon such a people, in such a country.

Why, therefore, not try it in Ireland? Alas! the whys and the wherefores are more than sufficient; not because it would not suit the *people* and the country;—not because it would give umbrage to the *universal voice* of Ireland, as a people;—not because there is any doubt of its being pleasing

and acceptable *to them;* but because the members for Ireland, being part and parcel of the aristocracy of that country, or at least bound to its chariot wheels, would not easily consent to any diminution of their present *supremacy;*—because they are not yet able to comprehend the maxim, *That rich tenants make rich landlords;* and, *perhaps,* because the Ministry of the day is not strong enough to stem the torrent of *interest, prejudice,* and *habit.* We do not condemn, much less vilify, this state of things. Can it be otherwise? Time, in God's good providence, brings all things about; nor can God's creatures, whether high or low, accelerate or retard his high behest, for

> "There is a Providence that shapes our ends,
> Rough hew them how we will."

It may indeed be urged, that the tenant would have to pay his landlord *the amount* of the country charges and other dues, in addition to his rent, and *perhaps more;* that this would be simply making the landlord a collector of the public taxes; and that it would bring the landlord into a still more onerous position with regard to his tenant, than he is in already. Against these objections, and in recommendation of the plan, we urge,—that the landlord would then know and feel his tenant's burthens;—that he would be less likely to exact, in one yearly sum, more than could well be borne;—that the tenant would be better able to know and calculate for what amount he must provide;—that it is fitting the landlord should guarantee the

amount of public burthens, since *he* enjoys their permanent benefits;—that as all must come out of the produce of the soil, both landlord and tenant would then feel a great immediate interest in increasing that produce;—and, finally, that the proposition is not experimental, but *imitative*, and strictly *practical*. At all events I can see no good and valid reason, why the whole of the county cess should not be put on an entire new footing, and "lifted off,"—meaning in English, "extracted from"—the landlords, since they generally receive back again more than half the amount in repairs of the roads, &c. upon their estates. This would operate as an abatement of the general rents of the country; but to prevent its operating indiscriminately, upon high and low rents, it might only be applicable to those rents which are ten per cent. above the Ordnance valuation. Government has in truth shown itself to be alive to the fact of too high rents, and has also evinced a disposition to mitigate the evil, by those indirect means which may be within its power.

Another proposition may be made; viz. that no tenant shall be evicted for nonpayment of rent, if it can be shown, to the satisfaction of the sheriff, or a person appointed by him, that the rent actually *paid* for the last seven years equals *the average* of the Ordnance valuation, the rent-charge valuation, and the poor-rate valuation; *i. e.* the medium of all those *public* valuations taken together, and the averages on which they are calculated, being com-

pared with the actual averages of those seven years. But, as this proposition will not be readily understood, let us take the average prices of the seven years to be ten per cent. less than the medium average prices, at which the several valuations before mentioned were directed by law to be calculated. Then, if the sum actually paid for rent during the seven years shall be no more than ten per cent. under the sum found on a medium of the three valuations, then the tenant shall not be evicted. But alas! it will be said, and too truly, that these several valuations are by no means correct; that the rent-charge valuations were given in general to persons who possessed interest to obtain the appointment, without strict regard to their qualification; that the Ordnance valuation was made by sappers and miners, superintended by road engineers, and not made on separate properties; one of the principles or rules adopted being to find the rental value of buildings by their cubic contents!—that the Poor-law valuation was conducted on the laudable principle of loading the rich, and favouring the poor; and also, that times and circumstances alter each case. Why, therefore, not have a valuation made under Government authority, by which all public burthens, as well as ejectments for rent, should be regulated, and this corrected every seven years?

Such a septennial valuation of all landed property might be made on a much better principle than has hitherto been adopted, *i. e.* by a com-

mittee of each parish, say of the seven principal owners, who should elect a chairman, and they should exercise their judgment on the annual value of each occupation, but when any of the lands or occupations of a member of a committee were under discussion he should retire, and one other with him, to reduce the number to five, the majority always carrying the question, but with an appeal to the grand jury, in case of the party feeling aggrieved. The jury should name a surveyor to settle the point at the expense of the parish, if he finds against the first assessment, or of the party, if the first assessment is confirmed by the jury on report of the surveyor. Now as this valuation would regulate ejectments, and even replevins, besides the franchise, it would be sure to be taken high enough, whilst a reference to the poor-rate, county cess, and other taxes, would tend to moderate any excess; and with this counterbalance of interests it might be expected to attain something like fairness, and it would not be difficult to lay down some general rules by which such a valuation should be regulated; and when once made out, it might easily be corrected every seven years to account for changes, or these might be registered every year by the road warden or other officer, to be paid by the parish.

I really cannot anticipate any other objection to these propositions, or some of them, but that of interference with private property; as if private property were not constantly dealt with by the legislature; as if private interest were not con-

tinually called upon to give way to the general good; as if the reduction of tithes by twenty-five per cent. were not an invasion of freehold property for the public good; and, as if the reduction of ten bishoprics were not a trenching upon vested interests. But these objections are not without importance. Why, therefore, connot they be met by a cure for the defects they allege? Why cannot one more Commission be added to the number already put in action? Or a permanent Inquisition, by which it may be ascertained, what was and is the fair rent of any farm sought to be made the subject of ejectment for nonpayment of rent, and what the amount of the equity of redemption?

It might also be worthy of consideration, whether these several imposts, as well as those others to which every civilized community must be subject, should not be consolidated into *one collection*, according to *one scale* of assessment on actual valuation, revisable every seven years, so as to keep pace with changes; and whether the tenant should not be entitled (so long as *he* continues to pay these imposts) to get credit for their amount, in and for every pound sterling of rent, paid or discharged by him, whether on account or in full. This septennial valuation might also serve to regulate ejectments under holdings at will, or for less than twenty-one years, in the manner mentioned aforegoing; but by simple reference, and comparison of rent actually paid with the valued rent.

Legislators of the present age have hitherto greatly favoured Ireland. Whilst they load England with taxes, and tax the income of the office clerks, they allow many of the luxuries of the Irish gentry to remain untaxed; and whilst England is taxed at *3l.* 13*s.* per head on her population, Ireland is taxed at but 11*s.* 3*d.* per head on its population. Now if we take the statistical elements of proportionate taxation as follows, we shall arrive at what Ireland in fairness ought to pay per head; viz.—

Ireland,	Population . . .	0.54	that of England.
„	Houses	0.48	„
„	Customs	0.09	„
„	Excise	0.15	„
„	Stamps	0.07	„
„	Post Office . . .	0.24	„
„	Cultivated Area . .	0.49	„
„	Total Area . . .	0.65	„
	Average ..	0.34	

or as nearly as possible one-third that of England, which would bring the taxation of Ireland to 1*l.* 4*s.* 4*d.* per head instead of 11*s.* 3*d.* as at present. The whole revenue derived from Ireland is no more than about one-twelfth of that from England, Wales, and Scotland, although her cultivated territory is one-half that of England only. If we are asked, Why? we answer, because the means of paying taxes are absorbed in rent and local burthens paid by the poor, whilst those rents themselves remain almost untaxed.

Take care, repealing magistrates and squires, lest it may be thought that justice to England

requires a revision of such inequality producing no satisfaction, and lest you may be told

> "For as thou urgest justice, be assured,
> Thou shalt have justice, more than thou desirest."

It is really worth while for Ireland to be turbulent, since it answers her purpose so well. This must of course be right, at least we are bound to deem it so, because great statesmen and wise legislators see farther, and perhaps clearer, from their elevation, than other mortals. This very elevation, however, may place a great man above the observance of what is going on in the little world below, of its wants and wishes, its hopes and fears, its feelings and its faults, till they are rudely shouted into his ears.

But this we know, humble as we are, that times of great and bitter evil require desperate measures; as violent and dangerous diseases require strong medicines, which wise doctors "throw in" *during a paroxysm*, not only with a view of subduing the present crisis of the disease, but of calming the tendency to excitement, and mending the constitution; and the time is come to look closely into the case, and to apply the remedies, one of which is to make the rich pay more and the poor less.

The turbulence of the Irish is, however, doubtless owing to the social evils of the day, which, having been long growing up, have now reached a climax and produced a crisis.

Social evils are long in perfecting their fruits; the periods of their *growth*, and of their *reign*, are

both considerable. They very gradually advance, stealthily approach their height, are for a long time borne in silent suffering, especially by the Irish; then a period of uneasiness occurs, another of feverish excitement succeeds, and even then it is long before *any* social evil is redressed; indeed, not till the patient has suffered more acutely from the attempted remedies, than he did from the disease. It is therefore not so much what is doing at the present period of time, that constitutes the social evil of the day, as the accumulated evils of what has been doing for many years, perhaps ages, back, doings which have steeped in poverty and misery generation after generation.

Thus, the period of the inordinate rents obtained during twenty-five years of war, and the means then used to obtain those rents, was the period of the growth of this social evil. It has since gone through various phases of retreat, and readvance; in consequence of the general fall in the prices of produce, and of that advent of *cheap provisions*, which ought to be reckoned a blessing *by* all, as well as *to* all, and which it is the first duty of every Minister of the Crown to bring about; although, to make that permanent, he must do what he can to render the production of provisions *fairly and reasonably remunerative* to the producer: and here is the difficulty, which only truly great minds can master. In consequence of this fall, the Irish mind (aye and the English, Welsh, and Scotch mind too,) has for some time past, been in a state of suffer-

ing and uneasiness, until now the period of feverish excitement has arrived, accelerated as it has been, and inflamed as it is, by the blinding pleas of politics; for *I hold that it is not Repeal, not the Church, not any of those thousand and one other political grievances, real or imaginary, that* COULD *have stirred up the present commotion in the minds of the Irish people, had they been in the enjoyment of that fair degree of comfort, which should arise from the annual renewal of those "good gifts" which the beneficent Creator bestows in requital of the labour of his creatures.*

I am, indeed, much inclined to believe that the present agitation has chiefly for its object the amendment of several social evils, of which the relation between landlord and tenant is one of the principal, and of which, again, this point of too high rents is so prominent a feature; and my belief is founded in this:—It cannot be unknown to the principal promoters of this agitation, that England was never, at any period of her history, so powerful as she is at the present moment; that she is really and truly now able to cope with all Europe in arms against her; that the enormous extent of her capital, and the high degree of security she enjoys, are sufficiently indicated by the price of Consols, being above 96, and rising; that during the twenty-five years' war, under all the checks to her commerce, which the most powerful of her enemies could impose, she raised, in 1814, a revenue of above one hundred and sixteen millions, nearly

double the present revenue; and that her pecuniary resources are since immeasurably increased. These parties must know that England is at least as proud as she is great, and that, sooner than submit to a forcible dismemberment of her empire, she would and must sacrifice a hundred millions of money, and 100,000 men. They know also, that even if to shake the fidelity of the army were as possible as it is the contrary, English gold would command any number of mercenaries. With this knowledge, the chief agitators cannot hope or intend to *bully* England into *any* political measures, however it may suit their present purposes to address their followers in far other language. They know also that England is at least as magnanimous and humane, as she is great and proud, and that rather than a civil war, she will grant any boon that may not touch her honour.

There are certainly, not only in Ireland, but also in England, many well-informed persons, who hold that Ireland ought to have a domestic parliament, seeing the prevalent ignorance of English legislators on most matters relating to Ireland and the Irish, and seeing also the great interference of Irish with English local affairs, *two-thirds* of the time of the Imperial Parliament having for the last ten years been occupied by Irish business. These impressions would *ere this* have raised such a *kind of majority* in favour of Repeal, as scarcely any Government could resist, if it were not for the conviction in the minds of steady men, that such a

parliament would be one of corruption, and of party jobs, of such exclusion, confiscation, and spoliation, that England would soon have to use the strong hand. These are not days for the revival of a parliament which got rid of the principal tithe of the country by voting "That any solicitor concerned in the recovery of such tithe was an enemy to his country;" and afterwards voted its own dissolution. Nor are these the days to desire a parliament with "a determination to possess themselves of, and to transfer to their posterity, their ancient rights and properties, which the abominable scum of England have from time to time plundered them of—namely, their estates, lands, and church livings—which are now applied to heretical purposes." (1798.)

Still it is natural, for a high spirited people, like the Irish, with a splendid country, nearly two-thirds as large as England, and about half as much land in actual cultivation, viz. thirteen millions of acres, with seven millions more uncultivated, and with easy access to the sea in all parts, to wish for an independent national Government; and although the well-informed see the impossibility of this, yet the vast majority, not being so on this point, must stand excusable, as they are at present taught to look for something to better their condition. "I wish," said a native to me, "O'Connell *would* bring over *the Repale*, for God knows we want *something* to do us good."

Surely, however, the proudest people on the

face of the earth need not be ashamed to belong to such a country as England, to form "part and parcel" of

> "This royal throne of kings; this sceptred isle;
> This earth of majesty; this seat of Mars;
> This other Eden, demi-paradise;
> This fortress, built by Nature for herself,
> Against subjection and the hand of War;
> This happy breed of men; this little world;
> This precious stone, set in the silver sea,
> Which serves it in the office of a wall,
> Against the envy of less happier lands;
> This blessed spot; this earth; this realm; this England;
> This nurse; this teeming womb of royal kings,
> Feared for their breed, and famous by their birth,
> Renowned for their deeds!"——

This is the way Shakespere describes England. Is there any Irishman can withhold his assent to a line of it? Then why not be a loving Sister to such a Brother? But, however this may be, England ought certainly to be ashamed of allowing such a Sister to remain in so forlorn and ragged a state, if it were possible for any brotherly love or assistance to prevent it. But sisters will have their own way.

At present nothing can be imagined more absurd than the anomaly which the affairs of Ireland afford. On the one hand, she enjoys in England the best market in the world,—almost an immunity from *public* taxes—vast grants of money for public works—docks, harbours, roads, &c. made—every assistance that can be rendered as to public contracts and other aids,—all disqualifica-

tions removed, "à great discouragement and heavy blow" given to "the protestant ascendancy," for the gratification of the majority of the Irish people—one-fourth of the tithes abated, and much of the remainder given up,—the mercantile interests of Ireland secured in all foreign treaties, and, in short, every thing done to win her heart, and with what success? Why, about the same as that of Hudibras with the widow, although he says,—

> "Madam, I do as is my duty,
> Honour the shadow of your shoe tie,
> And now am come to bring your ear,
> A present you'll be glad to hear."

But the widow is described to be somewhat like Ireland:—

> "She had a thousand jadish tricks,
> Worse than a mule that flings and kicks,
> 'Mong which one cross-grained freak she had
> As insolent as strange and mad,
> She could love none but only such
> As scorned and hated her as much;
> 'Twas a strange riddle of a lady."

So the Irish return all the wooing of England, not only with "kicks and flings" and all sorts of "jadish tricks," but threaten to "cut her adrift," to "set up for themselves," to "take the law into their own hands;" and amongst other "cross-grained freaks," she proves her poverty by showers of gold into the lap of those who abuse England best, and her loyalty by voting statues to those who menace her most, and win the hearts of the Irish by

"hurling defiance" in good set terms at their best ally.

Travelling in Ireland last autumn, I was seated at supper, with the company of the car, amongst whom were a red-hot repealer, and an intelligent American, between whom and an Englishman, something like the following dialogue took place :— *R.* We must and will have repeal.—*A.* But how will you get it? England is too strong for you and too near to you, and she knows that after all you mean separation.—*R.* No we don't mean separation.—*A.* And why not? you must mean that if anything, since you are always complaining of England.—*R.* Oh! but we can't afford to talk of separation at present.—*E.* Well, it would be more heroic to hoist the green flag at once, with *Erin go Bragh* in red letters, and fight it out nobly, as the Americans did.—*A.* That is our feeling on the other side of the Atlantic.—*R.* We shall carry it without fighting, or by moral fighting.—*A.* Then you'll astonish the world by such a victory, which will be the first of the kind ever gained.—*R.* No, Emancipation was such a one.—*A.* Not at all; Emancipation was a boon granted by England; now you ask her to cut her own throat to please you, or what is more, morally and physically to degrade herself; and even if she did, it does not appear that you are likely to be better pleased than you are now. At this the repealer got warm, twitted the American with slavery, who replied tartly, and the conclave broke up.

Really if the affairs of Ireland are not more efficiently managed by England, it *would* be better to let her manage her own affairs in her own way, badly as it appears *that* would be. In fact, England must either manage the affairs of Ireland entirely, or let them alone entirely. The eternal trimming between English and Irish men, measures, interests, and local circumstances, confuses every thing. We are not prepared to say that the same laws and regulations should at present be enforced in both islands, but this we know, that the sooner it can be so the better, and we believe that the general measures of Government have long purposely had that *tendency*.

Alas! it is the social evils of the day, that have been the cause of the present distracted state of things, and amongst these, none so much as the bad position of the relation of Landlord and Tenant.

Can, therefore, Repeal of the Union, and Confiscation of the Church and other property, be the real, even though the avowed objects of the present agitation? No such thing! The redress of social evils is in these days sought to be accomplished by very different means from those formerly employed. *Now*, things *impossible* are demanded in order to obtain things *possible*; a clamour for Repeal and spoliation is raised, in order to extort from England some amendments of the many social evils under which the community of Ireland is labouring. But why not ask at once specifically for these reforms? Because there is no hope of obtaining

them specifically at all, but through the humane dread which the English Government and people may have of the horrors of civil war.

I consider *this* to be the game now playing in Ireland; and I have no doubt that the bad state of the relation of landlord and tenant is one of the social evils which have led to the present state of things; that too high rents are a principal feature in the derangement of those relations; and that, unless something is done to assuage the pressure of those evils upon the people, the most serious consequences are to be apprehended,—consequences similar to what is even now going on in Wales, to what took place in many parts of Ireland, under the names of Whiteboyism, Rockites, &c. &c., and to that which brought about the horrid French revolution; in short, an agrarial civil war, directed against rents in general, and other public burthens in particular; not by force of arms, but by what is called *passive resistance*. Can it be supposed that the whole country, with the general exception of Ulster, is organized for nothing, or for objects so utterly unattainable as repeal, *alias* separation; that the chief body of the priests are embarked heart and soul in a hopeless political movement; or that a profitable partnership between England and Ireland would be dissolved by the poorer partner? No! It is for other purposes and objects, though unconsciously, that men are banded; and too high rents are the *prime cause* of that banding, since the

privations so generally suffered in consequence of those rents are the prime inducement for the people to congregate about any man of known talent, energy, and eloquence, like O'Connell, who will propose any thing on the plea of bettering their condition, at the same time flattering their national pride. We say that something *must* be done for the suffering Irish occupying tenantry, but, we say it in despair, seeing that, although the Tories, when they went out in 1829, had *twenty* remedial measures for Ireland ready "cut and dried;" although we have observed, as long as we can remember, an apparent anxiety in Parliament, one and all, to legislate wholesomely for Ireland; yet, such a fatality attends the government of that country, that everything valuable to it is obtained only by clamour and commotion. Thus, the tithe by the Whiteboys, the government roads and bridges by the Rockites, and, even emancipation, by the means now in force for repeal, viz. *intimidation*, arising out of *organization*. We may well exclaim with Voltaire, "Alas, with how little wisdom is the world governed!" or at least, how is that wisdom misled by the folly of those who have power to control it.

But, even supposing the clamour for repeal to be sincere, supposing the "insane dream," as the French so cleverly call it, to be a waking reality of purpose, the amendment of the relation between landlord and tenant would be the last thing which real repealers would wish to see accomplished,

since the anomalies and defects of this relation are to them and their cause "infantry, cavalry, artillery, and ammunition," aye, and "military chest" to boot. The defects of this relation have produced the "misery, wretchedness, exhaustion, and destitution; and diffused throughout the nation the want and woe, bitter discontent and heart-rending sorrow," which have been falsely attributed to the Union. The miseries and discontents arising from too high rents would alone keep alive any agitation which affords a semblance of relief, whilst there is no denying that the mass of the people of Ireland are anti-English, and ready enough to adopt any pretext for revolt. But still we say, let the mass of the people be made comfortable, let them enjoy the blessings which they themselves extract from the soil, and they will be quiet, content, and happy, and agitators may

——— "refrain, refrain:
They'll preach for ever, but they'll preach in vain."

After all, the universal question of "What's to be *done*," not "What's to be *said*," must be answered. We have here given honest evidence, consisting of "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth," as above thirty years' constant and careful observation has impressed that truth on our minds; and we agree, on the general question of Ireland's wrongs, with *much, not all*, of the following selection from the many

terse and pithy leaders which have appeared lately in "The Times."

"We do not wholly disagree from either of our correspondents. And, first, we assuredly never have argued, and never shall argue, that Ireland has not been mismanaged. And since, unfortunately, she has never in any period of her history shown the smallest symptoms of the capacity to manage herself, a mismanagement of Ireland has no remedy. Job the whole administration of North Britain as you will — give every man, woman, and child, the elective franchise, or confine it to the six men who have the oldest houses, or, if you like, the longest noses, in the country, still the cannie Scot will fall on his legs—be the government what it may, he will find out where to get butter for his bread; but misgovern Ireland, and you destroy her. There is in the people no ballast, no rectifying power, no steady public principle, no practical prudence to check or avert the natural consequences or concomitants of a jobbing government, an indolent clergy, an incapable or corrupt magistracy, a riotous and reckless gentry, a partial or enfeebled administration of justice. Ireland, we repeat, has been mismanaged. She has been treated upon wrong principles; and worse, she has been treated ill upon those principles; and it is to this latter that we chiefly owe her present state. Many of the evils to which she is subject are of a social character, for which

it would be mere quackery in a Government to prescribe; but so far as they are political, or are susceptible of political cure, they are far more accessible by a strong and wise Executive, than by any legislative redress of grievances.

"What, however, does our correspondent prescribe: An 'adjustment' of the relations between landlord 'and tenant?' Good. But what adjustment? That the laws affecting those relations *are capable of great improvement*, we do not for an instant doubt. And if so, they should unquestionably be improved. But it is vain to suppose that that improvement will satisfy. It ought to be effected; but when it is effected, the Irish people will not know what good they have got or are to get by it. What people are apt to picture to themselves when they talk of pacifying Ireland by this legislative change, is not a mere just and practicable reform, but either a transfer of the property from landlord to occupier, or the creation of good landlords by Act of Parliament. The first would, no doubt, be a handsome bribe, but it would be a rascally robbery. *The second would most truly be the making of Ireland,* but it would be wholly impossible. The appropriation of the revenues of the Established Church is the next item in the prescription. No doubt the 'monster grievance' has served as a most useful topic for Liberals of all sorts. By a constant harping on this string, they have worked half the world into such a state of quasi-mesmeric excitability, that a twitch or a

wink will almost throw them into fits. But when we look it hard in the face, what is the truth of the matter? If Erin's grievances are altogether a compound of humbugs, this may be one of the list. But can any one who supposes them real—who thinks the disaffection of the Irish people to be grounded on substantial, intelligible, sensible, reason, really suppose one of these reasons—nay, the 'monster' reason — the reason of reasons, to be the liability of their landlords' estates to a rent-charge of 500,000*l.* (in fact, not quite 300,000*l.*) in favour of the Established Church, to which those landlords principally belong. What more would the Roman Catholic tenant pay, or what would he care, if that same property had been mortgaged to the trustees of a Jewish synagogue, for three times the amount of the existing charge? Nothing—simply nothing. Then comes the moderate proposition, that all absentees (comprising some of the best landlords in Ireland) shall be compelled forthwith to sell their property, to the great convenience, doubtless, of gentlemen who have a few hundred pounds, and want to invest them in land, but to the ruin of many landlords and tenants too—and with no little violence to men's ordinary notions of justice and property.

"Few complaints are absolutely barren and unsuggestive, and so probably are not these. They smell of plunder, and would fail of their objects. But something may doubtless be done in the direction to which they point. Squirarchial mismanage-

ment may probably be checked—that great evil, absenteeism, may possibly be discouraged—by legislation. The established clergy certainly may be—not plundered, but—carefully appointed; and when appointed, made to do their work. All these objects are good—it will be happy if they are accomplished—but to suppose that they will make the difference between peace and disturbance in Ireland, is a mere dream.

"As to extension of the franchise, we shall feel more sympathy with that demand, when those who already have that privilege appear to exercise it on more rational principles. Men cannot (at least they should not till the bribery laws are repealed) eat, drink, or clothe themselves with the franchise. It is a means, and is no good to those who do not know how to use it. When the Irish peasant really shows symptoms of knowing his own interest, it will be time to talk of putting him in charge with it. While he is the mere gull of a brazen-face and a bold tongue, it is quite as well for him and better for us, that he should be without such powers. He is welcome to a 'sod' to light his own pipe, but not to burn our house over our heads."

We make no apology for quoting such a newspaper as "The Times," regarding its articles on this subject peculiarly correct, and generally, as a political "Rambler," treating important subjects in terse and elegant language.

CHAPTER III.

OBJECTIONS AGAINST LEGISLATIVE INTERFERENCE BETWEEN LANDLORD AND TENANT, ANSWERED.

We now proceed to notice various pleas which are apt to be put in, repellant of the fact of too high rents in Ireland, *or* in justification of the present state of things between landlord and tenant there. It is said,

1st. That the rents of land in Ireland are not actually higher, per acre, than the rents of similar soils, *i. e.* soils of equal goodness, in England, taking into account the public burthens and outgoings of each.

2d. That, if the Irish tenant pays a larger portion of the produce as rent than the English tenant, it is owing to his bad farming, which often yields him but half a rent, instead of three or four rents.

3d. That the tricks of the Irish tenant, to evade payment of any rent, are such as to require the strictest hold on and surveillance over him.

4th. That the natural or habitual improvidence of the Irish renders it useless to leave money in his hands, and therefore his condition is as good when the gains of a tenant are taken as rent, perhaps better than otherwise.

5th. That all Ireland wants, is facility of transit by means of railways; docks to encourage navigation and commerce, harbours of refuge to encourage fisheries, and other public works; and that, with these, she could get on very well in her progress towards prosperity.

6th. That Absenteeism should be checked by legislative measures, rather than any interference attempted between landlord and tenant.

7th. It is held by some, that the higher the rental of the country, the more industry is forced into exercise, in order to discharge that rental; *ergo*, that high rents are beneficial to the country, and at all events private property should be respected.

8th. That the condition of the people in Ireland is rapidly improving; that over legislation is mischievous; and that all Ireland wants, is peace and quietness.

Now, on the first of those pleas we say, that a comparison of soils does not *hold* in a comparison of rents; *that there is no proper criterion, on which to judge of or compare rents, but that of* PRODUCE, *since it is out of, and by means of produce only, that the rent, as well as every other outgoing, can be paid:* and having before stated, that the rents of land in

Ireland are approaching to double those of England *in respect of produce*, we now proceed to show, that soils of equal goodness in Ireland ought not to pay anything like the rent of those in England, by reason of various local circumstances; viz.—1st. Their remoteness from *market*, which *of itself* makes from 15 to 20 per cent. difference in favour of England, and against Ireland. Thus, in 1828, there was a difference of 13*s*. 7*d*. per quarter against Ireland, in the price of English and Irish wheat; and in 1831, the difference was 12*s*. 4¼*d*. per quarter against Ireland, being 22½ and 20 per cent. respectively on the English prices. The difference in price of oats in the two countries is in the same ratio, both owing to distance from market and inferiority in the quality and condition of the grain. We quote these prices from Mr. M. Martin. 2d. That the price of *labour*, far from being lower *in fact* than in England, is higher, by reason of its non-effectiveness in consequence of poor food and want of skill; besides the enervating effect of the *climate* in summer, and the time lost by the inclemency of weather at other seasons. In 16 cases quoted by the Poor Inquiry Commission 1836, there appears to have been an average of 13 hands per 100 acres employed over about 2000 acres, about one-half being grass land. This is above three hands in Ireland to one in England, though the proportion of grass land is greater. 3d. That the *climate* of Ireland is more uncertain, more humid, more productive of weeds, and less warm and ripen-

ing than that of England. Often in high situations the crop is destroyed by storms, and "the storm in harvest" is always expected. But it must be confessed that the climate is admirably suited for grass and green crops. 4th. That adequate buildings are provided in England chiefly by the landlords; but in Ireland, all buildings are put up and repaired by the tenant. 5th. That, in England, even the best soils have been long laboured and manured, and are let in good heart and condition; whereas, in Ireland, almost all the lands belong to one of two classes, viz. those thoroughly exhausted and worn out, and those which are in or near to a state of nature. 6th That the English farmer finds the lands well *fenced*, but the Irish occupier has to make or renew them all. 7th. That the English farmer finds his lands *under-drained:* the Irish has but just thought of such a vast advantage. To affix a value on each of these is difficult, and would be tedious; but taking only 10 per cent. for the first, viz. markets and quality, and only 5 per cent. for each of the remainder, which is ridiculously low, we have 40 per cent. *against* the Irish farmer; *i. e.* the Irish farmer's rent is in fact 40*l.* in every 100*l.* higher than the English farmer's on these grounds alone.

Against all which, and many more serious though minor disadvantages of the Irish farmer, as compared with the English, it may be said;—that the public burthens on lands in England are higher than in Ireland. Upon mature consider-

ation, I conclude the direct public burthens on land, *i. e.* poor-rates, county rate, tithe, highway and church rates, in England, to be about 40 per cent. on the rent, and those on land in Ireland about 20 per cent. on the rent. Balance in favour of the Irish farmer on the head of outgoings, 20*l.*—and so far "the Irish farmer has an advantage over his English competitor," as some of the poor-law inquiries have it,—but no farther. Now, taking the balances against him on markets, on labour, on climate, on buildings, on condition, on fencing, and on drainage, &c. as above mentioned, and deduct balance of outgoings, —20*l.*, the difference against Ireland is 20 per cent.; so that soils of equal goodness ought to let at 20 per cent. *less* rent in Ireland than in England, without any reference to produce; but *with* reference to the produce and other circumstances, they actually let at 100 per cent. more. This is a wonderful difference indeed, and quite enough to account for the impoverished and abject state of the Irish occupying tenantry, seeing that the English farmer is not a whit too rich or flourishing with enormous comparative advantages over his Irish brethren of the same craft. But, when to all this is superadded the vast inferiority of skill in farming, and smaller amount of *capital* applicable thereto, how immeasurably worse is the condition of the Irish than that of the English occupier of soils of equal goodness!

These excessive rents leave the tenant nearly

penniless at almost every little change of prices, and in the extensive dairy districts of the south, a low year would occasion general ruin amongst the tenantry, if it were not for money advanced to them by the butter merchants, to be repaid by future produce. This money often goes to the landlord in one sum; but where corn or flax are the principal saleable products, and these fall, the farmer is deprived of the means of paying his rent.

Sometimes when this fact of too high rents is sought to be combated or concealed, a quotation is made of the *average* rent of a county. But such a reference is very fallacious, since the very large proportion of mountain and bog reduces the average greatly. Besides, all the statistical returns are of *value*, (for fiscal purposes,) not of *actual rent*.

There is another source of error in the statistical or blue-book return of rents, which is this;—a tenant sells his interest, or what is called "tenant right," answering to "good-will" or "incoming," to another, for perhaps 10 or 15 years' purchase of the rent payable to the actual landlord. This actual rent may be considered reasonable at thirty shillings per acre, and such sales and purchases are continually made in the north of Ireland, although the tenures are at will, and the purchaser could legally be turned out at the end of any year of his holding. Money so advanced ought to pay 10 per cent.; now the annuity which 15*l.* down will purchase for 15 years is 34*s.*, so that this tenant's

actual rent will stand at 54*s.* per acre for 15 years, even if the landlord should forbear to advance his rent during that period. Thus, though he may have a good landlord, so far as rent goes, *he must* live on potatoes, in a hut unfit for a human being, and he must go in rags together with all his family —because *he must* have land.

About 3,500 answers to questions of rent are quoted by the Report of the Poor Inquiry Commission, 1836. These vary from 1*l.* to 3*l.* and upwards per acre, but they mostly give *averages* of vastly extensive parishes, which include a large portion of very poor mountain and bog land. It seems, from the general tenor of these answers, that 1*l.* per acre is a common average in parishes often consisting of 10,000 acres, and upwards; of which from one-third to one-half are of this kind, valueless; therefore, more than one-third of these parishes may stand at 2*l.* per acre; 30*s.* an acre is a common rent for very moderate soils; 2*l.* for medium; and 3*l.* per acre for good land in tillage, dairy, or grazing. Now we hold that, even in England, where the balance of advantages is 20 per cent. over Ireland, such lands as are here returned on the average at 20*s.* per acre, would be worth, to let, no more than 10*s.* per acre, and the lands returned at 30*s.* would be thought dear in England at 15*s.* per acre; those at 2*l.* in Ireland would let at about 20*s.*, and those at 3*l.* would fetch about 30*s.* per acre; the Irish money price being nearly double, though the circumstances are

20 per cent. worse than in England. We take the returns as statute measure, and though some are expressed in Irish measure, *they* are higher.

As to soil in Ireland, in comparison with that of England, there never was a greater mistake than that of Arthur Young, "that, acre for acre, the soil of Ireland is better than that of England." It is, on the contrary, very much interspersed with mountain and bog, and its rich soils are confined to a few spots.

The face of the country may be described as consisting of hill, plain, and dale.

The *dales* are the river vales, along which are some narrow borders of alluvial land, called "inch" and "holm" lands of good quality.

The *plains* are found on the limestone, occupying much of the central parts of the island; this limestone crops out westward into high and extensive "scaws" of *bare* rock, but falls eastward into poor gravelly shoals, thickly interspersed with bogs, some of great extent. More eastward the soil upon the limestone is deep and rich, especially in some parts of County Meath, King's, Dublin, Kildare, Carlow, Kilkenny, Tipperary, and Limerick, that in the latter two counties being denominated "The Golden Vale," or, as Commissioner Binns has it, "The Golden Vein," being but fourteen miles long, and six or seven broad. Much of these limestone lands in Meath, King's, and Tipperary, is in grazing grounds, much in dairy pasture, and the hill-foot and sides in tillage.

The *hills* occupy more or less all the swells between the streams; and all along the west, north, and south sides of the island, they rise into vast chains of the wildest mountain. The central and eastern sides are also embossed with similar chains, and the roots of all these mountains ramify into the swells between the river vales, and form more or less the "coarse lands" of poor slaty and quartzy, gritty gravel, or barren clay, with a film of heathy peat, which are found on the central part of those swells, and are improvable by means of lime.

So that, on the whole, *there is in fact far less good land than in England, in proportion to extent*, though the hasty assertion of Young has led every author to assume the contrary; whilst the general notion of vast fertility has apparently accounted for the high rents. The Railway map of Ireland, so minute in many respects, represents only a portion of the bogs, much of the country being laid down without bogs, where they abound in fact. Such is the soil of Ireland.—It is occupied in the south by large dairy farms towards the mountains, and small tillage farms on the limestone plains; everywhere, however, a great number of small are intermixed with larger occupations. The north is much cut up into very small occupations of tillage land.

The pecuniary disadvantage of this state of things to the Irish occupier is much greater than

at first appears. The monetary situation of the two occupiers will stand thus:—

	£	s.	d.
The Irish occupier, paying a rent of 100*l.*, and that rent being two-thirds the value of his saleable produce, that produce will amount to	150	0	0
Out of which he has to pay—			
His rent £100 0 0			
Taxes, as stated aforegoing . . . 20 0 0			
	120	0	0
Surplus to farm and live on	£30	0	0
The English occupier of a similar rent, and that rent being one-third the value of his saleable produce, that produce will be	300	0	0
Out of which he has to pay—			
His rent 100 0 0			
Taxes, as stated aforegoing 40 0 0			
	140	0	0
Difference	160	0	0
But the English farmer has positive advantages of 40 per cent. on rent, as before stated	40	0	0
Surplus to farm and live on	£200	0	0

So far therefore as a comparison of rents applies, the Irish farmer raises 150*l.* for every 100*l.* of his rent, and the English farmer raises 300*l.* for every 100*l.* rent. The Irish farmer has a surplus of 30*l.* to every 100*l.* of his rent, after paying rent and taxes, reducible, however, by at least 10*l.* for family expenses, leaving 20*l.* to farm on. The English farmer has 200*l.* to spare, after paying rent and taxes; but the Irish farmer has obtained nearly all his food out of the produce of his farm.

The English farmer has obtained also a portion of his food, but not all. Deduct, therefore, somewhere about 50*l.* for shop goods, &c. and he will still have 150*l.* *to farm* with, instead of the Irishman's 20*l.*, out of every 100*l.* rent.—A prodigious difference, indeed!

There are *some* drawbacks on this enormous difference of rent between the two countries, or it never could be borne at all. Thus, for instance, the rent-charge is mostly now not exacted, and the cess is to be on the Ordnance value, not on actual rent. The occupations also being smaller, the Irish tenant does much of the labour by himself and family.

But, on the other hand, as rent of land is *oftener three-fourths* than two-thirds of the produce saleable therefrom, it could not be paid by any means, unless the tenant set earnestly to work increasing produce by reclaiming *mountaine* land, *i. e.* a species of low flattish mountain, covered with a thin film of peat. The *necessity* which high rents create for doing this is the only mode by which its accomplishment is secured by the landlord.

This is a sad state of things; but how can it be remedied? Could a COURT OF RENT APPEAL be instituted, which should determine whether any *tenant at will*, or perhaps under twenty-one years, having notice to quit, has paid a *fair* rent at the end of every seven years, and what amount he owes, at the period of quitting, or being called upon to advance his rent? If the septennial

valuation, mentioned aforegoing, (*vide* page 82,) were made a point of reference, such a court would have easy duties. Such a valuation might also regulate the franchise; and, *en passant*, the above comparison, in full "Justice to Ireland," makes the leasehold franchise of 100*l.* in Ireland, *scarcely equal* to that of 50*l.*, entitled to a vote in England, *rent* being taken as the measure of *stake* in the country; but as all rents are not so high, say 75*l.* And taking into account that life leases are freeholds in Ireland, we say that 10*l.* per annum of such property in that country, would be scarcely equal to the 40*s.* freehold of the English.

There is, however, another species or class of occupiers, who pay the whole value of the produce in rent. These are the cottars or labourers of the country, who, not being able to obtain constant employment, are under the necessity of hiring as much land as will give their families the quantity of potatoes required for their consumption, called con-acre, or score land. This *necessity* is taken advantage of by those who have the land to let, who help to pay their own enormous rent by exacting from these poor creatures the full value of the crop they produce by their own labour. Thus, moderate land, on which between 200 and 300 bushels per acre *may be* grown at two to three pence per stone, will be charged 8*l.* per acre; but if the land is deemed capable of growing from 300 to 400 bushels per acre, 12*l.* will be charged, and this must be paid, or security given, before

the potatoes are suffered to be dug. The payment being partly in money, raised by the sale of the pig, fed on the potatoes of the previous year, and partly by labour at sixpence to ninepence per diem, leaving the cottar next to nothing for clothing, much less for housing. It is by this process that the Irish landlord becomes accessory to the misery of the country thus created. But the miseries of the poorer classes of the Irish, both in town and country, have been often enough depicted. Are they not written in the chronicles of every writer on Ireland for the last two hundred years? As to myself,

> ——— "But that I am forbid
> To tell the secrets of this blighted land,
> I could a tale unfold, whose lightest word
> Would harrow up thy soul, freeze thy '*thick*' blood,
> Make thy two eyes, like stars, start from their spheres,
> And each particular hair to stand on end,
> Like quills upon the fretful porcupine;
> But this astounding blazon must not be
> To ears polite."

It must be evident to all—that the evils of the present state of society in Ireland, more especially the miserable state of the lower orders, corresponding to that of the smallest farmers and the labourers in England, cannot be meliorated by any one grand measure, or in any short period of time. It must be by a series of measures, extending in time over more than one generation, that any great impression can be made. But if there is a single legislative measure calculated more than any other to strike at the root of the evil, it would, I think, be some

kind of control or restraint on the enormous price charged at present for potato-ground. But how *can* this be done?—How can we prevent a man "doing what he will with his own"? Would you attempt the control of private property?—Parliament will never authorize it. Perhaps not; but *that* is not the strongest argument against it. And did we consider that two millions of persons are made and kept paupers by the present state of things, *i. e.* by the difficulty with which they can procure the means of producing for themselves the lowest kind of food; did we consider that the misery suffered by these paupers is a national disgrace, as well as an incalculable national loss; were it considered that the misery of these paupers is a serious burthen on the landowners themselves, occasioned by themselves; in fine, were it possible that in our easy chairs, the whole sum of misery occasioned by the present state of things could but for an instant be presented to our minds, we should not rest till we had found or imagined some sort of cure for this evil of 12*l.* per acre, or the whole value of the crop, for potato-land, without which at least three millions of human beings could not live at all. Yet *with* this practice, they can hardly be said to *live*, but only to *exist*. Is this practice, then, beyond legislative regulation? Do we in England control the time, the occupation, and even the "most sweet voices" of some persons, so as to avoid offence to "ears polite," and shall we say, that for anything we can do, three millions of "wretches must want, that

middlemen may dine?"—Or shall this system be left "unscathed," in order to assist in paying too high rents, or in reclaiming mountain-lands, for "the improvement of Ireland!" No!—Parliament, though, like corporations, "without a body to be kicked or a soul to be saved," is not without humanity. I have watched Parliament for many years with regard to Ireland, and have observed it to be anxiously intent on any measures for the good of that country, and more particularly of its poor. Why, then, cannot it enact,—that in every parish there shall be an officer annually elected, who shall regulate the price of *score* or con-acre land, according to the soil and other circumstances, such price not in any case exceeding one-fourth *more* than the fair value of the land let by the year as common farming-land, on the average of the farm to which it belongs?

And in order to prevent the farmers from refusing to let the cottars have score land on these terms, let this officer make out yearly a list of the farmers having land and of the cottars wanting it, and let him allot to each cottar his score land with the consent of the farmer; but if either are dissatisfied with such allotment, let them, or either of them, have an appeal to any magistrate of the division, whose decision shall be final; and in case of the farmer still being refractory, let the officer have power to purchase potatoes, to supply such cottars as were kept out of them by the farmer, and charge the farmer therewith, to be afterwards

repayed by the cottar. There will be no want of equity in this, that I am aware of, but there will be some trouble; and so much the better, since the effect will be gradually to convince the farmers that they must, for their own sakes, employ the people, pay them in money, and sell them such potatoes or other food as they may choose. Such an office would soon supersede that of Repeal Warden. But here again "a lion is in the way;" and still I fear that "wretches *must* starve, that landowners *may* thrive."

The locating of those poor persons who have no land, *i. e.* sons of small tenants and others, upon coarse lands, whether bog or mountain, might be practised to a much greater extent than it is, and I have found it answer by setting out lots of 20 to 30 acres of sound improvable mountaine land, where the bog or peaty surface is not too deep, and where a good aspect is afforded by charging somewhat more rent than the ground is worth to graze as mountain, and allowing the new tenant to work out nearly the whole of the rent for the first year or two, in allowances for building, fencing, draining, liming, &c., afterwards diminishing the allowances until the whole rent can be paid in money, by which time the new settler will be established and able to go on during the remainder of the lease, when the land will be worth at least double the rent. Now, if we take the land to have been first worth 8*l.* per annum, but let at 10*l.*, in consideration of allowances and assistance to the

tenant in his locating, and say half the rent is allowed during the term, the account will stand thus, viz.—

21 years' rent at 10*l.*	£210
half allowed	105
Deduct 2*l.* extra rent	42
Actual cost . . .	£63

for which a rental of 20*l.* is created, worth 500*l.* to 600*l.*, less original value 150*l.*, profit say 400*l.*, an augmentation of property sufficient to satisfy any one. But say the whole rent is laid out in aid of the tenant's exertions, and in roads, &c., the value created will be about double the cost. But an indispensable condition of success is, that every thing must be done by the tenant with the landlord's assistance, not by the landlord, the tenant looking on. The sort of persons to be thus located on improvable mountain lands, are of quite a different description to those poor cottars whose chief dependance is on a rood of potatoes, and on a few stray days of uncertain employment. Some benevolent persons, seeing the destitution of this latter grade, have wished to see *them* also located on bog and mountain land, but the difficulty is to find amongst them persons of sufficient energy and enterprise; for such characters small lots might be made out, but then they must be assisted in building a hut, and in draining and fencing their lot, besides the process of earthing it heavily if bog, and liming it afterwards; such assistance

would never answer to any individual at so small a rent as such a cottar could safely assume, but it might answer to a parish to hire such land at its original value, and locate its poor thereon, because it would keep down, or in time annihilate altogether the poor-rate of that parish. Power to do so, should therefore be legalized. And on the whole there is no doubt, that with proper and honest (honest!!) discrimination of persons and means, all the bog and mountain in Ireland might be gradually absorbed into cultivation, and yet full employment found for the whole future population.

The adoption of the Allotment system, as practised in England, has been recommended, but this would never do in Ireland, since the same land will not continually grow potatoes year after year. A certain degree of freshness to that crop is absolutely requisite in almost every soil; besides, the most useful allotments to the poor in England are those of half a rood for cabbages, beans, peas, lettuces, spinach, French beans, onions, carrots, parsnips, and the like, which are all included under the name of "vegetables" or "garden stuff," but are almost unknown to the people of Ireland. A greater quantity of ground does mischief, is more than they can manage, and soon gets out of order and quite unproductive. The English poor would soon be like the Irish, "if every rood of ground maintained its man." To bring the Irish poor into the same state as the English poor is quite another thing, and not at present to be aimed at.

The question is, what is best to be done with the Irish poor? They must have potatoes; but small farms, or lots of ground, as one, two, three, or four acres, do not answer the purpose; the ground soon becomes exhausted, and perpetuates poverty and misery. It has always done so in England, where the larger farmers often helped the four-acre men, who invariably ended their farming by begging of the farmer to take the land off their hands. In Ireland, after the exhaustion has taken place, and the poverty become confirmed, a struggle begins between the landlord to obtain the rent which at first might be paid, and the tenant, who now finds it quite impossible; he therefore feels himself beat, and becomes supine or reckless. This is the present system and its consequences. We are seeking for a remedy, and it is in vain to talk of difficulties, of interference with private rights, of letting in abuses, or of objections to this or that plan: it is vain to say, teach the one-acre or the four-acre man to make the most of it; he cannot do it, it is not in his nature. The degree of intelligence, of activity, energy, enterprise, prudence, perseverance, and of industry in a labouring man do not rise to it; they do not in England to the extent of one instance in a thousand, and would not in Ireland to the extent of one in ten thousand. The labourers of Ireland must have potatoes, and must have them on fresh ground nearly every year. They do so get potatoes at present, but under circumstances of oppression as

to price of the ground, and of difficulty and great uncertainty of getting them at all. This must be remedied; and how can it be done by a better mode than that we have pointed out? You cannot give them money to buy potatoes, and the farmers will not or cannot employ or pay them money for that purpose. They must have land to employ themselves upon, and on which to produce food for their families by their own labour. Then why not take the land on fair terms from those who have it, and give it on fair terms to those who want it, and must have it on any terms? If a money-tax was thought of, which would distribute universal comfort to almost all the poor of Ireland, would it not be levied instantly? Why not, therefore, institute this kind of land-tax, or such a tax in kind on land? I grant that the proposition is startling, and so is the amount of misery to be remedied. The position is this: potatoes must be had by the poor—ground must be had by them to grow them on—the farmers possess this ground —they ought to give it to the poor on reasonable terms. No one will deny this; but many will disapprove the remedy proposed, viz. insist on the farmers in every parish finding potato ground for the poor of that parish, under certain equitable rules and regulations, combining the general good with individual interests. The interference of Parliament in preventing the payment of wages by the truck system is analogous to this, and so is the limit of the hours of employment, *i. e.* an inter-

ference with private rights for the public good. What we propose would be no more, nor would it in principle go beyond the law of nuisances, which says that in the enjoyment of his own property a man shall not seriously abridge the enjoyments of his neighbour. The cottar's case is still stronger; he may say,

> —— "You take my life
> If you do keep from me the means
> By which I live."

At the instance of O'Connell, the Government of that day established an officer in every parish, called a Replevinger, whilst they encouraged or allowed himself to establish another officer, called a Repeal Warden. I believe both these officers to be useless. Let me say, then, to the present Government, do you establish a useful officer, call him what you will, say Rood Warden, but let his duty be to assign to each cottar potato ground according to his family, but say one rood. I can see nothing extraordinary in such an officer learning how many roods are wanted, and how many farmers to supply them on the same fields where their own potatoes are planted, the Rood Warden settling the price. Nor can I see why that price should not be paid in money, and not in labour, as at present; and the farmer also should pay in money and not in potatoes; both according to the principle of abolishing "truck." The cottar or labourer would then be sure of his food, and obliged to labour for his clothing and the rent of

his cabin. His means of obtaining these also might be assisted by loan funds, clothing clubs, and the like matters, which would have been found absolutely necessary by the inhabitants of parishes to save their own pockets from the poor-rate, but which now are lost in the vortex of Electoral Divisions, as "everybody's business is nobody's." But say objectionists,—and many buts and ifs will of course be started,—"How are you to define between farmers and cottars?" Why, determine it on the spot, either by the acreage or the rent, as most expedient under the local circumstances. "Ah, but," says the political economist, "by rendering cheap food secure you are encouraging early marriages." Perhaps so; but, my dear sir, marriages are now universal almost as soon as the age of puberty arrives; and if you introduced better clothing and habitations, early marriages will be checked, because young persons will be more apt to wait till they earn the means of obtaining what will then be considered the necessaries of life, as mere potatoes are now so considered.

But employment for labour is the "one thing needful" in Ireland, and hence a "labour-rate" has been proposed. A labour-rate has often been adopted in England in such parishes as admitted of voluntary assessment for that purpose, and in some the system of "roundsmen" has been practised;—viz. men, otherwise idle, going round the parish one week with one farmer, two with another, according to the magnitude of their holdings. But

I cannot see how either of these modes are applicable to the state of things in Ireland. As to voluntary assessment, it is out of the question; and any kind of compulsory employment is extremely difficult in that country. It would have been much less so had the parochial system been established with the poor-laws. But, even as it is, surely some regulations may be salutary in a matter of such vital importance. But any such measures must be general, not local. It will not do to favour some great city, because some of the ministry happened to be born within twenty miles of it. It will not do to favour railways, on which oats, and potatoes, and turf, will be the principal passengers. Such railways, like the Eastern Counties, costing perhaps 100,000*l.* per mile; and if so, such railways, not conveying annually the amount of the interest of the first cost. Local jobbing, or even local patriotism, will not do. It must be some general mode of absorbing general labour, of bringing the demand to an equality with the supply of labour, everywhere and at all times; not by fits and starts, but steadily, "ever and always." Now, to devise such a mode is no small matter. It cannot be done without a tax of some kind or other, and in Ireland we have a mortal aversion to taxes of any and every kind, unless we get something by them. The desideratum, then, is "a profitable tax." We at once therefore propose—that a rate be levied on the owners and occupiers jointly, sufficient to keep the idle poor employed within every parish. This

is a bold proposal, to be sure; and has not been ventured on in England as a legal step, but the exigencies are great, the disease is active, malignant, mortal, and bold remedies are called for. Why, then, hesitate?—But where's the profit? Where! why, fourfold on the fruits of labour.—What! in forced labour?—Yes. Explain—I do not understand.—I believe not; but attend. All the labour employed in rural affairs has for its object the increase of the products of the earth; now the value of this increase ought to be four times the value of the labour employed to repay the rent, taxes, seed, labour, and expenses incident thereto. But labour *is* largely employed to increase the products of the earth. Therefore we may safely conclude that it *does* repay those incidental charges which are four times its amount. What hardship, therefore, is levying a rate which repays itself fourfold?—Ah, but first "make me sensible of that," say we in Ireland. Alas, how little sensible are we of any of our blessings, and how hard to convince us that we must lend in order to receive back with interest, we must invest in order to fructify, we must sow in order to reap. There is nothing, indeed, so stupid in the present era as what Lord Liverpool very justly called "an ignorant impatience of taxation." Besides, as to this tax, it would be saved in the reduction of poor-rates. Nothing, however, can be clearer than that labour is the means of production, and production of wealth; therefore the employment of labour is

the means of wealth. Now, in order to make this labour available, we propose a parochial labour-rate, sufficient to employ all the hands not otherwise employed. But in what? Why, in roads, foot-paths, rivers, reclaiming waste land, public drains, or any other matter or thing found wanted or desirable in the parish by the officer appointed to regulate this matter, who might be called the Labour Warden, who should also be Road Warden, and if any individual was particularly benefited by such works, he, she, or they, *i.e.* landlord and tenant, should pay towards the same such sums as might be assessed by the Labour Warden and any two magistrates jointly, with appeal to the sessions, either by the parish or the individual. The monetary effect of such a rate I take to be incontrovertibly beneficial. Now, as to the moral effect: would it not be tending (and we have before remarked on the power of *tendency*) to urge every one of those who are liable to the rate, to employ as many men as he could voluntarily, rather than have to pay involuntarily for labour which, though beneficial to the whole parish, might not be so beneficial to any individual as that which he himself directed? The moral tendency on the labourers themselves, would be to enable them to obtain much better food, clothing, and furniture, and to give them less leisure for mischievous pursuits, whilst on the landed property of the parish much substantial improvement would be inevitable. But objectors will say, why force labour into

employment? Nothing forced answers well. All things should be free to find their own level in time; coercion is bad; and so forth. All of which may be very true in the abstract, but may be quite misapplied in the present case, which is one of compound fracture, and the patient must be bound hand and foot; and even when the fracture and luxation are reduced, he must be put under a course of diet and regimen not necessary to a healthy subject. This, in fact, is a case for a Sir Astley Cooper to operate upon with his bold but skilful hand, with his sharp but sound-restoring knife. If the political Sir Astley be not *now* found, the patient must linger in all the pain of dislocation, and the misery of disjointed organs, till a crisis seals his fate. But why, say the landlords, levy any portion of the labour-rate on us? Because your estates must be improved by its effects, and because generally your rents are too high. And here "the lion's in the way." The application of a labour-rate might be partly and indeed principally to the reclamation of wild bog and mountain land, which might be hired by the parish, and pauper families located thereon, out of the labour rate. The rent might be fixed by the septennial Government valuation before mentioned; and the owners would thus be benefited by its improvement, whilst able-bodied poor would be kept out of the Union-houses, and they would keep their relations from going there. It certainly does seem wonderful that so many millions of acres should lie

idle, whilst so many millions of people are looking on them in idleness; but Ireland is the country of anomalies, and in my opinion it would be well if we studied and adopted more the German mode of managing landed property, viz. by appointing one officer to regulate the fences, another the turbary, another the cropping, another the buildings, another the roads, and so on.

The establishment of some regulations which should ensure both employment and potato land to the cottars of every parish, would be attended with more immediate and powerful good effects than almost any other measure. The most apparent, and in fact the greatest sum of misery is to be found amongst this class—take away or materially mitigate that misery, and you change the face of the whole community. Give the cottar a decent house and clothing, and the certainty of food for his labour, and the farmer will immediately amend his own condition and mode of living; the next grades above him will amend theirs, and new wants will beget new energies; for everything in this world is comparative, and all will strive to keep their rank and station, and not let those upon whom they look down *seem* better off than themselves, for "what's a monarch in a crowd of kings?"

THE SECOND PLEA refers the oppression of rent to the paucity of skill and capital; and certainly, where the too common deficiency of these is greater than ordinary, *the whole* of the saleable produce will often be required to raise even half the year's

rent. But to what, we ask, is this paucity of skill and capital owing? The true reply is: To the absolute impossibility of capital being accumulated under the prevalent high rents! And failing the acquirement of property, the absence of ambition to acquire or exercise skill. "I'd be *lazy*," says the Irish farmer, "to learn to farm better for the benefit of my landlord entirely!"—by the word *lazy*, not meaning idle, but *loath*, or *unwilling*; and by *entirely*, meaning, that he would expect his landlord to take *all* the benefit. Nor can we reasonably wonder at the bad farming of one whose good farming, if he could afford to practise it, would only enable him to reduce an arrear which sits but lightly on his conscience, or perhaps afford a pretext for raising the rent, which his utmost efforts are already taxed to pay. Neither can we much wonder at the small and slow success of Agricultural meetings, and shows of Farming Societies, and Schools, notwithstanding the *éclat* that attends their public days, since farmers cannot divest themselves of the latent feeling, that these are efforts of the landlords to sustain or advance the rents, rather than to impart that skill, by the exercise of which *capital would be acquired.* We hold, therefore, that the bad farming is mainly owing to the too high rents, although rents are *also* made too high by bad farming. This is an evil entirely beyond any legislative remedy, save such as may have a *tendency to encourage good farming*, and of that class would be the giving to every tenant a legal claim to a portion

of the cost of all such drains, manurings, tillages, and seedings, as he may *leave* in and upon the land, the full benefit of which he may not have enjoyed, but leaves to the landlord, or his incoming tenant, to enjoy: but of this more hereafter. At present, we have only to repeat our opinion, that the bad farming of the Irish tenant is much *more* owing to the too high rents, than that the rents are too high because of bad farming.

On this subject, "The Times" Reporter from Wales, September 1843, has a pithy article, which we know to be a true picture, and very applicable to Ireland, only that the Irish farmer is superior in his pigs, and has almost dropped his successive corn crops. He is also less wedded to old habits, less parsimonious, and employs his *eyes* more and his *hands less* than the Welsh farmer. We cannot forbear copying the passage.

"The Carmarthenshire Agricultural Society held its anniversary here on Thursday. This Society, however little good may be effected by such associations in England, is, from the peculiar circumstances of the country, calculated to produce the most beneficial results among the farmers here. Already many of them are beginning to see, by comparison with better and improved modes of cultivation, and with better breeds of stock, how ruinous are their own closely-hugged and antiquated systems. Their prejudices are giving way to the evident profit of improvements. English landlords and farmers will

be astonished to learn, that it is by no means an uncommon thing here for the farmers to grow fourteen white crops successively on the same land, and that you may go for twenty miles, over farm after farm, without ever seeing a field of turnips. A turnip-field is here rarely heard of, except on a farm here and there, cultivated by an English farmer, or on the farms of large landed proprietors, where they are grown as experiments. I speak now of the county of Carmarthen. I am told that many of the landlords are anxious to get their tenants to cultivate turnips, and green crops, and in many cases have volunteered to give them the seed, if they would sow a field with it. They are, however, very rarely prevailed on to do this. Enterprise was not generated in Wales. They never did grow turnips, nor their fathers, nor grandfathers, and why should they? The consequence of this system of farming is, that the land gradually gets worse and worse, until it is completely exhausted. In many parts of South Wales, in the valleys, the land is naturally good, and the climate is superior, or at any rate equal to that of Lancashire, Yorkshire, Cumberland, Westmorland, and Durham; yet the white crops grown here never weigh so heavily, by many pounds in the bushel, as the white crops grown in the above-named counties. The reason is, that the land, for want of a due succession of crops, becomes completely exhausted. It may be said, the farmer is to blame for this. But he knows no better! He

jogs on in the beaten track of his forefathers, and out of an impoverished piece of land, strives to raise a rent equal to, if not higher than, that which the English farmer pays for land in good growing condition. The result is a gradual sinking into poverty. In their horses and cattle, you see the same want of skill evinced. There is no getting the Welsh farmer to breed anything but the Welsh black cattle, which neither fatten well, nor milk well. It is because he knows not of the superior qualities of the Durham and Hereford breeds. His pig is the same profitless creature—a great lank, long-legged brute, which nothing will fatten. A Berkshire pig would be shown as a wonder. Their horses are the same. You see commonly three wretched brutes, about the size of ordinary mules, half wild, dragging a cart, not much larger than a good-sized wheelbarrow, up and down their hills. One good active horse would draw with ease more than double the load, and do twice the work. Much of this backwardness in improvement is no doubt owing to a spirit of parsimonious economy which pervades the people. They will not pay for a better breed of horses; their own costs them a little less, and they are content with an animal worth one quarter of the money, to save *2l.* or *3l.* in the original outlay. A Welsh farmer never thinks he does his duty by working with his head; and does not seem to know the value of the proverb—'A master's eye is worth many pairs of hands.' If he but hedges and ditches himself all

day long, like a common labourer, and saves the wages of a labourer thereby, something less than one shilling a-day, he thinks he has done well. The English farmer, who walks or rides about his farm, and sees that his hedges are in order, and that his men are at work; who watches his crops, and the result of his experiments in cultivation, and determines thereby his next year's course, and who has a ready hand for everything, would be pronounced by the Welsh farmer to be the laziest of mortals. The Welsh farmer cannot conceive that a man can work if he is not digging, and delving, and stone-breaking all day. The result of this is seen on their farms. There is a manifest want of head exhibited—a slovenly neglect of hedges; and their farm-yards exhibit a want of order and cleanliness—have a dilapidated and untidy look, that in England would be thought disgraceful to a farmer."

We quote this paragraph for two reasons. 1st. Because it is a picture of Irish as well as Welsh farming. 2d. To show that there are other backward districts in the Queen's dominions beside those of Ireland. But if any one wishes to peruse a still more graphic sketch of Irish mountain farming and living, let him read the Assistant Commissioner's Report of it in 1835, or the condensed extract from that Report, in the article *Wicklow* of the Penny Cyclopædia. Read also, "The Miseries and Beauties of Ireland," 1837, by Jonathan Binns, an Assistant Commissioner of

Inquiry, preparatory to Poor-laws, one of the Society of Friends, and evidently a person of attainments, good taste, and good feeling. See also parliamentary report of "Poor Inquiry," 1836. We have quoted, and shall quote from these works in corroboration.

THE THIRD PLEA on the part of landlords, involves the necessity of strictness towards tenants, because of their proneness to evade payment of rents. And there is no denying the fact of the utmost ingenuity being constantly exercised by every class of the tenantry of Ireland, to delay the payment of rent, if not to escape it altogether. Let those who have had "dealings" with classes far above the tenantry, say, whether or not this disposition is confined to the latter. But why is this? As to tenants, it is because the landlords exclusively have been the law-makers, to enforce rents which the tenants know and feel to be too high; because they, the tenants, deem the law which enforces undue burthens to be unjust, and deeming so, they easily slide into a *conscientious* evasion of such laws, and *thence* into a *resistance* of them, which the conscience cannot approve.

But what is the reason that the English tenant has scarcely any anxiety so great as that of *punctually* paying his rent, whilst the Irish tenant exhausts his whole ingenuity to delay, or evade it? What, but this,—that the English tenant has in general a deep interest in his holding; he pays for it in rent, *communibus annis*, only such a

portion of the produce yearly growing and arising as leaves a fair remuneration for his capital, and time, and skill, after defraying all charges of cultivation, &c. His farm constitutes his *status* in society, and the nonpayment of his rent would ruin his credit, and blight all his hopes.

Now, as to that side of the picture which represents the Irish tenant, I shall only refer to what is stated aforegoing, adding, however, here, that the tenant in the south of Ireland who should succeed in devising *a new* mode of defeating payment of rent would be deemed a benefactor to his country. And why? Because, when all feel more or less oppressed by rent, all would feel gainers by an abatement of that oppression, by whatever means attained. In all their plots and plans to this end, the fact of most of the smaller tenants having *two* languages, Irish and English, whilst the landlord, or his agent, has but *one*, gives them a decided advantage, which one may easily estimate by the crowing of any youngster from school, who happens to retain his cramming of Greek and Latin, over any old fellow who has forgotten both. How knowing he is! From these reasons we argue, that too high rents ought not to be charged, because of the difficulty of getting in *any* rents; and that those difficulties are mainly owing to the rents being *generally* too high; so that, even where they are not so, almost the same difficulties exist in their collection, from the general diffusion of the reluctant spirit.

And generally this extraordinary reluctance on the part of the Irish to obey the law, is a trait in their character very distasteful, if not incomprehensible, to the English, because they do not see that the law, as it stands, in the relation of landlord and tenant, especially affecting the great mass of the people, does not secure them either a reasonable share of comfort, or the due reward of their industry. Hence the people try to evade these laws, and with them all others, and hence the necessity of the amendment of these laws.

THE FOURTH PLEA, points to the improvidence of Irishmen, and intimates that they would squander the money they acquired by farming, if not exacted from them as a rent. This I distinctly and emphatically deny as a *general* proposition, from experience of many mountain tenants in Ireland, who having been permitted and encouraged to become prosperous by the terms of their holdings, have husbanded their acquirements, and by means of them increased their sphere of industry, in the most judicious manner. The Irishman becomes reckless only when he finds care and labour *useless*, but place him in a position for himself and his family to reap the *fruit of his* labours, and he becomes as industrious, as skilful, and as provident, as the same grade of labourer in any other nation, not excepting the English, apt as *they* are to arrogate all virtue to themselves, comparatively.

The next, or fifth landlord's plea is to this effect:

"Let us manage our own property in our own way, but give us plenty of money for public works."

Now, if there is any truth in the pages aforegoing, the immediate landlords of Ireland cannot, consistently with the well-being of the community, be any longer left to manage their property *entirely* in their own way. Some general principles must, it is quite evident, be laid down of restraint on those powers which man acquires over man, by the possession of landed property, a species of property which often inflates its possessors in an undue degree, and induces them to look down upon their fellow-creatures as dependent beings, who are indebted to their landlord for *the means* of subsistence, and the sweat of whose brow is therefore *his* property and *his* right. Or otherwise, the poor tenants are looked upon as persons ever ready to defeat and defraud the landlord of his dues, and therefore themselves fit objects of stratagem or coercion. We have already said, that the exceptions to this general state rather prove than impugn its universality, and have endeavoured to show the impossibility of the relation of landlord and tenant remaining in its present state. The first part of this plea must therefore inevitably fall to the ground.

There is, however, another version of this plea, which may be read thus: "for God's sake, do not seek to lower our rents! our incumbrances already leave us little more than agency fees out of our estates, and we shall be obliged to sell, if our rents

are lowered." Now, the courts of law hold that they have nothing to do with consequences. Justice ought to hold the same, and it would be better for all parties so desperately involved, to sell out at once. But in most cases, this would not only be unnecessary, but what we wish to recommend, viz. leases and improvements, would recover many estates and incomes from perdition. Time and perseverance, even in small annual advances on the present produce, would effect much. One-third might easily be added to the value of an estate in 20 years, and thus the debt made light; whereas, the lowering of its value by one-third in that time, by neglect, and recklessness, annihilates the existing interest altogether.

As to the second member of this plea, viz. Increase of public works, we hold the gratification of this insatiable appetite for the public money to be rather injurious than useful to the public weal, and the prosperity of Ireland, and are of opinion that the great extent of these public works has already too much diverted attention and industry from the improvement of the soil; that they have taught both landlords and tenants to look to extraneous means, rather than to the internal resources of their estates and their farms; the landlords, having eagerly sought for public money wherewith to build harbours where is no trade, and piers, which in a few months have been swept away, without one stone having ever been replaced, and even churches, so badly constructed, as to require

repair almost as soon as finished. To establish railways largely in a country like Ireland, is to employ a steam-engine to draw a cork, or slice a cucumber, unless as a mode of facilitating intercourse with America, as once proposed by Valentia.

Those who are strenuous advocates for railways in Ireland ought to reflect on their effects in England, where not supported by the vast population of such beehives as Birmingham, Manchester, and Liverpool; those effects being to destroy the traffic trade of all the towns near which they pass —to put down all the coaches and carriers' carts— to prevent travellers stopping at the inns, which are almost all knocked up—to put an end to commercial travelling—to cause the roads to be neglected—to lessen the number of horses, and the consequent employment of people and consumption of corn and hay—to lower the value of all real property, and to annihilate much of it altogether—to sink capital in an abyss where it is continually becoming less and less, and from which it can never be reclaimed, whilst it yields nothing *ad interim*; in short, to extinguish much profitable industry, and to establish unprofitable industry in its stead. Such effects one would think anything but wholesome for such a country as Ireland, yet railways are desired there in compliance with a fashion which may be termed the monster mania.

I much doubt whether the labours of the Bog Commissioners, in their four blue books, have accelerated the general drainage or improvement of a single bog

in Ireland, and the only practical idea they promulgated on the subject has been much neglected, viz. the necessity of applying a great quantity of earthy matter on the surface of the peat. Thus is exemplified the non-utility of public money being expended, until private enterprise requires its aid.

Still, public works are to a certain extent proper and necessary in Ireland, but they ought to be kept within reasonable bounds, and not custom-houses built for twenty times the trade; gaols for four times the number of prisoners; bridges costing 20,000*l.*, where 5000*l.* would have answered every purpose. All the millions of public money which have been already spent in Ireland could not be proved to *pay* one-eighth per cent. upon their cost. It may be said that they have promoted industry. I say they have been but as the stimulus of a dram, whilst they diverted industry *from the land*, the true object and end of steady permanent employment in Ireland:—harbours of cut stone, to shelter a few cock boats; and grand canals, on which a ship of war might float, and two might pass abreast, chiefly employed in the conveyance of turf fuel! Mr. Commissioner Binns says of the harbour of Howth, "The piers enclose 52 acres. These works, the cost of which was upwards of 300,000*l.*, are now of but little use, the sand having collected at the mouth of the river." The pier of Ardglass, County Down, cost 26,000*l.* The Gaol and Infirmary at Downpatrick 120,000*l.* Besides, it is time to lay aside that system of bonuses by which

Ireland has so long been misgoverned, her aristocracy having been always bribed to do their duty by "*sops in the pan.*" It is high time to begin governing by equity between man and man, and *not* by corruption; by rewards for services performed, *not* by previous payments for expected influence; and this more especially since it has been so clearly demonstrated, that political gratitude is *but* "*a lively sense of favours to be received.*"

As to employment by Public Works, we hold that were the landlords to remember, *with due effect*, that admirable maxim, "PROPERTY HAS ITS DUTIES AS WELL AS ITS RIGHTS," all the population of Ireland, present and to come, would find ample, profitable, and permanent employment, and be well housed, well fed, and well clothed, whilst the landlords also would be enriched. I am aware of the boldness of this position, in a country said to contain two millions of paupers, or about one-fourth of the population. Still, I undertake to prove its feasibility, by irrefragable arguments, drawn from "*Experience, and the evidence of facts,*" in the course of the following pages.

THE SIXTH PLEA against interference between landlord and tenant is in favour of some legislative dealing with absenteeism. This has been often proposed, but as often laid aside. Mr. M'Culloch, the political economist, proved to a Committee of the House of Commons, on the principles of that science, that absenteeism caused no *national* mischiefs, because the rents are in fact remitted *in the*

produce of the *industry* of the country. But surely this, however true, only disposes of the question as a *monetary* matter, and that only in its first step. But even the monetary effects must be bad. For instance, the exports of Ireland, in 1835, were 17,394,811*l.*, and its imports were 15,337,097*l.* Now these latter were received back in exchange for Irish produce sent out, but leaving a balance of trade of about two millions sterling against Ireland, and which balance would be greatly lessened if there were no absentees. But are we to consider as nothing the *moral* difference to the rural population, between a rental of 10,000*l.* a-year being spent on the spot which produces it, and being sent to England, or to Italy? Can we shut our eyes to the moral deprivations which society on that spot endures, by the desertion of its natural patron and protector; or be insensible even to the monetary difference, *to that spot* at least, between this 10,000*l.* being sent at once away from it for ever, and its returning to be distributed amongst the miller, the butcher, the clothier, the shopkeeper, the carpenter, the mason, the smith, and the labourer and others, *each* of these again forming a nucleus for its distribution amongst all the rest; so that this 10,000*l.*, spent amongst those who *raised* it, circulates not less than ten times amongst them, *each* circulation producing some profit, occasioning some industry, and, superior even to charity, is not only twice, but ten times, blessed.

Absenteeism is, therefore, not only a great

moral, but a very serious *monetary* evil in the *agrarial* circumstances of Ireland, and a *very great* disadvantage to its *rural* population. But how can it be remedied? You cannot justly punish people for not doing that which is, perhaps, impossible to them, viz. living on all their different estates, or for preferring one to the other; but, on the same principle that bachelors were double-taxed in England during the revolutionary war, so might some additional burthens be imposed on absentees in Ireland. Yet there is every probability of such taxation, however levied, ultimately falling on the tenants, and so increasing present evils. Absenteeism is, indeed, indirectly taxed, by the fact of the non-taxation of the income and equipages of residents in Ireland. It would be too much to enact now, as was done in Elizabeth's time, that every landlord should have or build one principal mansion or residence, within the county, of the value of one year's income of his estate in that county. What, then, *can be done* to discourage absenteeism? We have no specific suggestion, but that of encouraging residence, by making the country worth living in. But we think the period not far distant, when division of property, arising from the extravagance of families, and the fall of times, shall spread resident purchasers through large portions of the land, and no land would afford a more ample share of the comforts and the luxuries of life; witness the County Londonderry, where, to *a considerable extent*, " peace and happi-

ness, truth and justice, religion and piety, are established among us."

Some landlords have sought to mitigate the mischiefs of absenteeism by placing *resident* agents on the property. This sometimes turns out but the substitution of a king-stork for a king-log; and it oftener is merely placing a man of a very few hundreds a-year to fulfil the local social duties of a man of several thousands a-year, and exposing him to the hourly witness of privations which he cannot supply, and daily application for assistance which he cannot render. The true notion of an agency is an intelligent collecting executive agent on the spot, with a legislative agent and auditor visiting annually; for if the resident is not subordinate, he has a will of his own, and if not respectable, he is not respected.

The only true remedy for the evils of absenteeism will be found in a thorough reform of the relation of landlord and tenant, viz. by putting that relation on such a footing as shall mitigate the prevailing too high rents, and afford such assistance and co-operation by the landlord towards the good husbandry of the tenant, as may be consistent with the interests of both. This, however, cannot be done solely by the legislature. The landlords must take the "labouring oar."

We now come to THE SEVENTH LANDLORD'S PLEA against interference, viz. That the high rents stimulate industry which might otherwise remain

dormant, and that surely "we may do what we will with our own."

This continuance in evil that good may abound, would be like the continuance of slavery in the West Indies, lest East India sugar should take the lead. Indeed, the continuance of the present state of things in Ireland would be much worse, as a moral evil, than the continuance of slavery in the West Indies, for the slaves in the last-mentioned country were cared for, looked to, and their wants so abundantly supplied by law, that I read somewhere of the Colonial Office having ordered every black man to be furnished with every requisite according to a list, and amongst them, a razor yearly, (I have a common black handled one which has performed its office daily for above thirty years,) and finally, Government paid twenty millions of money for the emancipation of *those* slaves. What, then, will not Government do for the reduction of slavery in Ireland; for surely the fact only of the occupying tenants in Ireland not happening to be *called* slaves in common parlance, will not disprove the *fact* of their being substantially in a state of slavery, just as much as the blacks of the West Indies, though in different, and, to my mind, a less advantageous *mode*. Both are doomed to labour for a master far more than for themselves. The difference is, that whilst the black slave was cared for, and his minutest wants supplied, the white slave is only

visited when the sweat of his brow becomes tangible in rent. The black was urged to labour by the whip, but the white slave is whipped to far greater exertions by the rent. Few cares clouded the black's brow, since if times or seasons failed, it was his master's loss; but the white slave to rent is subject to every loss, although he toils and cares unceasingly. The black had time allowed to labour for his freedom, the white can never hope for freedom; for if he succeeds in farming, his rent is raised, and, like the cup of Tantalus, the cup of competency ever eludes his lips. What a contrast does the state of the English tenant present! *He* is a freeman, in every sense of the word, so long as he pays his rent with punctuality. What has constituted this vast difference between the freeman and the rent-slave? The moderate rents, together with the co-operation of the landlord, in the one case, and the excessive rents, together with total absence of assistance in the other; and this state of things having continued for centuries, has accumulated *good* in the one case, and heaped *bad on bad* in the other. But let us not be unjust; let it be recollected that this comparison only holds in cases of too high, *i.e.* oppressive rents, and in such cases, disguise it as we may, the rent-producing slave is still worse off than the sugar-producing slave.

Twenty millions of money were paid, with the effect of converting the comfortable slaves of the sugar-islands into miserable squatters on *abandoned* estates. Where *now* shall we find a Wilberforce,

with humane eloquence fervid enough to plead the cause of the miserable squatters of that *terra incognita* called Ireland? The poor African is befriended and bought off. The much more wretched Irishman is abandoned to a much worse fate. Well may we exclaim—"With how little wisdom is the world governed!"

Still rent, it is said, stimulates industry. So it does, when moderate enough, and under circumstances which secure the fruits of industry to the industrious; but in excess, rent and arrears check and smother industry; for who would be industrious without reward, or who will act with energy on the perverted maxim, that "the hand of the diligent maketh *another* rich?" Whereas, fair and moderate rents, with leases and assistances, somewhat like those of England, but *mutatis mutandis*, would not fail to stimulate industry in Ireland, and place not only the punctual payment, but, in due time, the fair advance of those rents on a footing of certainty.

As to the second member of this plea, that landlords should be left to "do what they will with their own," the slave-traders and slave-holders long said the same. The late Mr. Nimmo, an eminent engineer, and a powerful-minded man, was asked, in a Committee of the Lords on Irish Poor: "Did he not think a *free trade* in land as fair as in any other property?" "Yes, my Lord," was the reply, "if you also allow a free trade in gunpowder!"—meaning, as I conceive, that if the law allows the landlords to charge what rent they like,

or otherwise oppress their tenants as they please; if the law arms the landlords with full powers to exact these rents and to reduce their tenants to mere slaves by their oppressions; if they, the landlords, trading in land, are enabled to say to their customers:—You are so circumstanced that you *must have* that in which we trade;—fixed to the spot, you *must demand*, and *we* only *can supply*; therefore you must give us our price; and the law arms us with powers to get it out of your four bones in any way we can;—if the law enables the landlords to say this, it goes much further than allowing a free trade in land, it permits a *monopoly*. The real free trade would be the *open* one alluded to by Mr. Nimmo. But the landlords ought to be restrained by a sense of their duty to God, to their neighbour, and to themselves, from doing *entirely* "what they will with their own." Nay, the most common principle of law is, that a man may not use or employ even his own, so as to *injure* another, much less to reduce him to a state lower even than that of the West India slave.

THE EIGHTH PLEA against interference is, that the condition of the people in Ireland has improved, and is rapidly improving; that legislative interference may have all the mischiefs of excess; and that peace and quietness is all Ireland wants, to ensure the continuance of her growing prosperity. We shall make some remarks separately on each of these members of this plea, although they will occasionally run into each other.

That the comforts of the better classes of the agrarial population of Ireland are amended, generally, within the last thirty years, I, who have annually visited several of the agricultural districts of that country for above that period, can aver as a fact, according to all the outward and visible signs of such amendment, *i. e.* the houses of the farmers are more comfortable; their roofs are slated, instead of thatched; an ample chimney now conducts the smoke, instead of the former hole in the thatch; the cow is mostly banished to the outhouse, and the pig often; the family, for the most, attend their place of worship, decently clothed, on Sundays; and in some few houses, a side of bacon is to be seen, though more rarely in the south, than in the north of Ireland.

Truth, however, compels me, though reluctantly, to state, what I know to be the fact, that under these improved appearances, less real moral comfort, less prosperity, and therefore less content, exists than at the period when high prices of produce enabled the farmer to hide bank notes in the thatch of his cabin, for the daughter's fortune, which, latterly, he has accumulated in an overstock of cattle. This was, perhaps, before those high prices had stimulated the cupidity of the immediate landlord, or that the agent had felt it "his duty" to report the tenants to be richer than they *seemed*, and therefore *still squeezeable*. It was moreover common, at that period, for tenants to disguise their riches under the most abject appear-

ance of poverty, lest their rents should be advanced. But their true condition, under war prices, soon "oozed out," and this trick lost its virtue, and became so far neglected that the occupying tenant of Ireland has since evinced a spice of that disposition, nay determination, to *lodge* and *live* better than formerly, which is of late very generally demonstrated by every class in the British dominions. This universal disposition to live better has been adopted by the Irish occupying tenant, not always by favour of, but often in spite of the terms of his holding; but in him, it has scarcely got beyond the luxury of milk with his potatoes. In England, I know of no particular of amended diet amongst the working classes so striking as the general consumption of oysters—a luxury deemed in my young days above the reach of any but the rich.

Whilst we admit, therefore, a considerable amendment in the habitations, clothing, mode of living, and conduct of the Irish occupying tenants, we cannot but attribute that amendment to other causes than *agrarial* prosperity; and doubtless one of those causes is the initial of that assistance on the part of landlords which we have now so strenuously undertaken to advocate, and the necessity of which is beginning to be felt.

As to the general improvement of Ireland, much as one wishes to recognise it really and truly, let any one read Arthur Young's Tour in Ireland, about 1776, and let him look now for the nume-

rous mansions, parks, farming establishments, and improvements, which *he* then visited and recorded. Most of the mansions will be found deserted, shut up, and the roofs fallen in; the parks let out in dairy pastures and "score" land; the farming abandoned to tenants, at rack rent, and the improvements resolved again into their original state of bog, and partly cut for turbary.

Commissioner Binns says, 1837:—"By comparing the account given in 1776 by Arthur Young with the facts elicited in the course of this examination, it will be evident that the condition of the lower Irish, instead of being improved, is considerably deteriorated since his valuable book was written." About Balina, also, he says, "It will appear by Arthur Young's account of the diet of the poor in this part, that their situation is considerably deteriorated."

An extraordinary fatality attends every thing in Ireland, but more especially in the south;—everything "*goes to the bad*," as the phrase is. A water flour-mill is built where little or no wheat was ever grown. That crop is immediately cultivated largely. The mill is let for 200*l.* a-year (worth in England about 50*l.*); the going gear is neglected; the tenant, who is without capital, breaks; and in a few years after its erection, the mill is seen unroofed and wrecked. A decent house is built, in a pretty situation, by the roadside, and for a time flourishes in all the pride of slated roof and "dashed" stone walls. Forest

trees are "put down" around, and fence walls built with stone. A few years elapse; you pass by again, and observe the windows broken, the door hanging by a portion of a hinge, the slates blown off, the cows amongst the trees, and the walls breached. Instead of the neat and commodious jaunting car, with lively ladies at the door, you observe a swarm of squalid children, playing with the pigs on the manure heap. All of which is a great contrast to England, where the genteel cottage soon becomes a box; the box, a villa; the villa, a family residence, promoted in due time, if favourably situated, to the rank of a mansion. Wherefore this difference?—We are compelled to say, that too high rents are alone sufficient to account for it, although there may and must be other ingredients in the deadly cauldron. This, however, is

"The monster evil in the Irish breast,"

which,

"Like Aaron's serpent, swallows all the rest."

About 1745, and at other periods, great efforts were made for "the improvement of Ireland," always, whatever may be said to the contrary, a favourite and popular subject with the English. Diocesan or Charter Schools were established, with capital houses and nearly 100 acres of land to each. Everybody's sons were to learn everything; but before the end of that century the masters had become middlemen, the scholars had fled, and the houses had become dilapidated.

Sessions and market houses were built in towns about the same period; inns established and furnished on a handsome scale; balls and assemblies regularly held; visiting and gaiety were the order of the day amongst the higher and middle classes; and to support this, the poorer classes were oppressed by rent. Alas! what baseless hilarity! what unfounded prosperity! all now fled—"like the baseless fabric of a vision," leaving nought but "wreck behind!" The *Corinthian capital* of aristocracy must rest upon the *fluted pillar* of the middle class, whilst this must be supported on the broad *pedestal* of the commonalty.

Under these circumstances, we cannot say that the agrarial population of the south of Ireland is in a more prosperous state than it was thirty years ago; for, although we perceive cultivation creeping up the mountain-sides, we cannot but remember, that this is only the wretched tillage of the wretched cottar, who is allowed to plant his *rood* of potatoes, at the enormous rent of two pounds per annum; or has a forty-shilling franchise for election purposes.

If we look to the north, we find villages without a loom, where formerly the shuttle almost unceasingly plied at every window. The poor son of the once flourishing weaver poorly tills his twenty acres, passing for a farmer of respectable extent; and even the growth and manipulation of the flax crop leave him but the shadow of those comforts, of which the march of machinery has deprived the farming tenants of this part of Ireland.

Commissioner Binns, 1837, says: "Again and again we were informed that the small tenants (south-east of Inniskillen) were in a wretched condition, the entire body of them being in debt to the amount of at least one year's rent. It was said to be impossible for a man paying as much as from 30*s.* to 2*l.* an acre to live comfortably; and as to making money, *that* of course was out of the question. So greatly reduced was the capital of the farmer, and confidence had received so severe a shock, that it had become more difficult to borrow 5*l.*, than it was ten years ago to borrow 50*l.* This change is attributable to high rents and low prices; trade moreover is gone, and the looms are standing idle in the farmers' houses."

Again, the emigration from Ireland is enormous; 30,000 to 50,000 of its people have, in some years, gone to America, proving their uneasiness at home.

We cannot, therefore, consider the condition of the people connected with agriculture to be geneally improved in point of wealth; but, on the contrary, think that their means have been much reduced, by a succession of low years, whilst the reduction of war rents has not kept pace with the reduction of war prices.

Now, as to over legislation, there can be no doubt of the existence of so great a tendency to this fault, especially in little things, that Parliament is in great danger of bringing itself into contempt, especially with the Irish, some of whose members have obtained acts on *public grounds*, to

serve their own private purposes. For instance: one who was much in debt, obtained an act to serve *every tenant* on an estate with a legal process, instead of one or two, as before; but he had perhaps one thousand tenants, and lived in so wild a country, that he boasted of his park gates being thirty miles from his mansion, and he knew that it would be certain death to any man attempting such a service. But a case like the present, wherein the well-being of a whole nation is involved; wherein both landlord and tenant are equally interested; wherein something plainly must be done to calm the public mind; and wherein abuses are known to exist; such a case calls aloud for such legislative remedies as the circumstances admit. These remedies may be difficult to find, as well as to apply; but it is in difficult cases that the skill of the physician is manifested, and surely *we* need not exclaim, "Is there no balm in Gilead! Is there no physician there!"

For it may now well be said,

> ——— "The nature of our people,
> Our cities, institutions, and the terms
> For common justice, ye are as pregnant in
> As art and practice hath enriched any
> That we remember."

If, indeed, we take a comprehensive view of the actual state of society in Ireland, it will present a most appalling case, and one which requires the utmost energies of the greatest state-physician that ever lived. We fear that such a complication of

diseases is beyond the skill of *all* such doctors, even in consultation together; and though the patient can't be cured, yet from the strength of his constitution he will not die, though all his functions are seriously deranged. In the *landed interest* we find former reckless extravagance now felt in an accumulation of present debt; with a consequent cupidity for rent; neglected, oppressed, and therefore miserable tenantry; and an absenteeism of two millions of rent annually: in the *manufacturing* interest, combinations of workmen controlling masters and men, and checking or smothering enterprise by threats and even murder: in the *religious* world, fierce jealousies and mutual abuse between three churches: in *education*, each of these three churches trying to take advantage of the other: in *population*, enormous increase of pauperism, an unpopular poor-law, and a flourishing mendicity: of *law* we dare not speak, even in a whisper: in *politics*, a continual seeking for something like national independence, without the slightest hope of attaining it, or capability of using it if obtained. To all which add a hatred of England for her superiority, with a puerile imitation of everything English in the "outward and visible sign," but avoiding that imitation in the "inward and spiritual grace." Alas! poor patient, what remedy can be found for such a complication of disorders? We can only imagine them to be curable one by one. Your recovery will be tedious, and you must have a military nurse to administer your

medicine! although "every foot-soldier costs as much as would employ and pay *three* labourers, and every dragoon *seven*." If a specific *was to be* tried, we would recommend,—that all the laws of England should be in force for Ireland, and that at once and for ever. We do not know that this is "Peel's panacea;" but we do know that he might well exclaim, "My great difficulty is Ireland!" That indeed was, is, and will be a difficulty to every minister in all times to come.

Thus much, however, is quite certain; that Ireland never can be governed by letting every body have his own way, by denouncing the "miserable monopolizing minority," who possess most of the property, and much of the intelligence of the island, or by opening the doors of prisons. Neither can Ireland be governed by bribing lip-loyalty, or by patronage of the powerful few, or by enabling them to "law it" as well as "lord it" over the dependent many. Well, then, how can she be governed? Why, she *never will be* governed while the minister or ministry never lasts long enough to know her well enough to govern her well; and we hold that nothing undermines the *constitution* so much, as the frequent change of the state-*doctors*, especially as to Ireland. "Go it, boys!" says one, "I'll back you! Your freaks are only the spawn of your own wrongs! A little *agitation* does you good; circulates the *blood*, and warms you up to noble deeds! To clamour for the *repeal* of an act of parliament is no offence!" Whilst the other

quietly "*pours in*" quite another sort of medicine, calculated to calm the agitation which the former doctor had promoted. One cherishes the apothecary as a valuable ally; the other accuses him of poisoning the patient, with a view to cut the thread of his (political) existence.

To resume: legislation is in this case absolutely requisite to produce that peace and quietness of which Ireland stands so much in need. Admit that repeal meetings are repressed; that associations for repeal are put down; that O'Connell is silenced. Suppose to be cured by new enactments that extraordinary anomaly in our laws (free enough, God knows! but, perhaps, too free for safety) which permits parties to form societies; raise funds,—ay, treasuries,—to meet in vast numbers, *say* 500,000, and to make exciting harangues; to publish exciting addresses and inflaming songs against existing laws and institutions, or against existing interests, whether Irish or English —freedom, which anomaly in morals tolerates, the rich manufacturer thus seeking to become richer by making the poor farmer poorer—still the minds of men are unsettled, rankling with a keen sense of grievance. The whole mass of the Irish people are bent as one man on some means of redress. As to rebellion, insurrection, or even popular commotion, they know well enough that these would be brushed away, like the buzz of summer flies around an aldermanic nose; but far other, and more troublesome disturbance of the social system will

assuredly become general. Like the circling eddies of disturbed waters, it will spread, from Tipperary onward, till the whole surface is affected, and the turgid waters lash the remotest shores. It may be then too late discovered, or rather acknowledged, that the law of the land may not be the law of the people of that land, and that scarcely any executive can long continue to enforce laws which are felt to, and do, *ipso facto*, grind and oppress the people, by preventing the fair enjoyment of the fruits of their industry. It will be vain to throw the burthen on the landlords. The feeling is, "You, the legislature, have armed the landlords with *powers* of oppression which they have used; we have borne these oppressions as long as we are able, but low prices have now rendered them unbearable, and we simultaneously but quietly resist them." Thus peace can never be established (I do not say *restored*, for I know not when it did exist in Ireland), until prosperity is made to beam upon the occupier of the soil, by an amendment of the relation between landlord and tenant.

But what chance is there for "a consummation so devoutly to be wished?" Alas! what minister will be courageous enough, on his own responsibility, to deal with *so tender a subject* as too high rents? Some ministers would treat with disdain any suggestion on the subject, as a presumptuous attempt at instruction. The usual course of a commission or a committee may be resorted to; but what of them? The committee will report accord-

ing to the previous general bias of its members, or perhaps of its chairman and secretary, perhaps the latter only. Then a committee might write its report before it commenced its labours, on the mathematical principle of—Given the names of the members, to find the nature of the evidence which will be adduced, and of their report thereon. And I will venture to say, that if *two* commissions were issued, one to inquire into the good, and the other into the bad points of the subject, the one would report, and substantiate by a mass of unexceptionable evidence, that the Irish landlords are angels; and the ponderous blue-book of the other would prove that they are "devils incarnate;" so that "the united wisdom" of the nation would have to draw stakes upon the question, and leave the matter in *statu quo*, voting, perhaps, that the truth lies between the two extremes, and that the thing is "well enough," and had better be "let alone."

According to Dugdale, in his work on Embanking, &c. it was the practice of the crown, so far back as Edward I. viz. about 1272, to issue commissions of *ad quod damnum* on matters of drainage, &c.; but the effect of these commissions was so insignificant that they fell into disuse, and have been but recently revived. It may also be mentioned of the blue-books issued within the last ten years, that, though containing a vast mass of information, they have become so unconscionably bulky and diffuse, that in a few hundred years the accu-

mulation will be monstrous—an excess of arrangement has introduced confusion, and they want that simplicity of plan and terseness of language which would enable an inquirer at once to find the information he needs. Some portions of their contents are also sadly incorrrect; as for instance, the area of parishes given in the Census of England of 1831, was often wrong by thousands of acres, yet the same quantities are adopted in that of 1841.

These commissions and their bulky blue-books are doubtless sometimes highly useful, and elicit the most important information in many cases, such as harbours, roads, or other public works, their necessity, use, situation, plans, and expense. It is very true that these blue-books sometimes contain a vast mass of very important scientific facts and principles, giving "light to lighten the gentiles;" but sometimes these facts are distorted, and seen or represented through a false medium. Like a dioramic picture the gauze of party intervenes, and makes a painting, perhaps a daub, appear like a reality. Besides, although we ourselves have figured in blue-books, we have observed that, in local examinations, it is not the individuals who would be the soonest consulted in society that figure there, but those pushing, loquacious, consequential persons, which every district affords. Some persons are gifted with a loquacity on almost any given subject, which most hearers take for profound information on that subject; for, as they recollect of it only that much was said, and

their attention fixed, they conclude that this could not be unless much had been *well* said; when, after all, what was said amounts to nothing; but they enjoy great *éclat* for the nonce, which is their only object. I also observe, that the merits of persons of the same political creed as the commission are extolled, whilst the greater merits of those on the other side are overlooked, or "damned with faint praise." Again, it cannot be expected that men will answer political questions candidly, particularly in Ireland. Thus, in the Whig Report of Commissions of Poor-law Inquiry, the efforts of an excellent landlord in two baronies are slurred over, he being a Tory; whilst, in another barony, a Whig landlord, well known to be indifferent, if not inimical to any expense for improvements, is highly extolled. This is in the system, and doubtless the Tories would do the same. They will, for instance, on the question of rents, set down something *much* within the mark, or disguise the truth by an *average*, for fear of taxes, &c. to follow. Every one knows the habitual caution of the Irish in answering questions, and though they reply off hand, it is evasively. We take commissions to be excellent in cases where a specific proposition is given, to find the facts bearing on the point pro *and* con.; not *pro* alone without the *con.* But in moral matters like the present, they are apt to receive but one-sided evidence, the other being shut out, or, what is just the same, not invited, or at any rate not present.

These commissions are often in matters political what arbitrations are in matters legal. In the one, you set up persons to act as legislators who are not legislators; in the other, men are set up as Lord Chancellors who are not Lord Chancellors in any sense; and the consequence in both cases often is, that breaches are widened, and additional expenses incurred. Yet arbitration *seems* a good way of settling differences.

Besides, so many commissions and committees are calculated to irritate the Irish, since all their expectations from the minute examinations of the Poor-law Inquiry Commission ended in a tax. Whereas the general inquiry amongst the people was, "What have the gentlemen come to do for us?"

No less than 114 commissions and 60 select committees sat on Irish affairs between 1801 and 1833; and no less than 4,118 public Acts of Parliament, besides 197 local Acts, have passed in the same period (M. Martin). Doubtless these were highly beneficial towards their respective objects. Yet still the condition of Ireland becomes worse and worse; and, above all, this monster grievance remains untouched, and without the removal of this, all other improvements will be like a building without foundation, a house built on the sand, a castle in the air, and must inevitably fall the moment that the winds blow and the waves rage, or even with the first and slightest adverse gale.

CHAPTER IV.

OF LEASES.

THE second grand head of our discourse, viz. Leases, is one of the utmost importance in any consideration of the relation between landlord and tenant. Leases are the keystone of confidence in a tenant, the talisman of good farming, and the only security for the reward of exertion. It is therefore an error in any landlord, to consider his tenant's wish for a lease as a mark of want of confidence in himself or family. If a tenant has the means and the inclination to make costly permanent improvements, costly to him either in money or in labour, he is equitably entitled to enjoy them with *absolute* certainty during a specified term of years. He can then, whether poor or rich, make his arrangements accordingly.

The present practice respecting leases to occupying tenants in Ireland, differs greatly in different districts. In the south, 31 years with a life concurrent, to create a freehold, are not uncommon to tenants of some property and respectability, who

are likely to improve the estate. Such leases, however, so seldom contain any covenants for particular improvements or modes of management, that the forms are kept printed, and are at once filled up with the names of the parties. Such leases usually contain a clause enabling the tenant to surrender the term into the landlord's hands; but as there is no restriction on underletting, except those of the subletting act, the lands are usually let out in small parcels, at "profit rents," as soon as the hiring has answered the immediate purpose of the first lessee.

This is still more largely practised under those long leases denominated freeholds, leases for ever, or for lives, renewable for ever, or leases for five hundred years. Many very extensive mountain tracts are held under such leases, and parcelled out by the lessees amongst small holders.

In the southern provinces, particularly in Munster, these small holders, and also the larger mountain tenants, the immediate occupiers, are almost invariably tenants at will, from May-day to May-day. During rising times, the continual watching of the efforts of these yearly tenants to improve the lands, and the continual "hitching" of their rents, made many fortunes out of the "thews and sinews" of a poor but industrious population, working on the mountain-side at war prices for their produce, hoping to get rich with no other capital but their "four bones." And rich they were in numerous families—the pig alone, in those days, paying the rent; but since

"times have gone agin them," they have been dispersed, some to beg, some to America, some of the more thriving remaining on the land, and a succession of other farmers of the same class constantly filling up vacancies, or *squatting* upon new spots. In this manner, the wildest spots have been cultivated, and estates of hundreds converted into thousands per annum, whilst thousands of human beings have been supplied with the means of providing themselves with sustenance. *In general*, the immediate landlord's conduct towards this kind of tenantry has been marked with humanity, and even kindness. The advantage was reciprocal: *they* were creating an estate for him, and *he* was affording subsistence for *them*. When, however, we consider the multitude of beggars in every part of the country, and the fact of nearly one-fourth the population being paupers, we must conclude that a large portion of these first squatters has been driven forth from the site of their labours to make room for the next grade of occupiers. But, as soon as *farms* began to be established, *some* degree of capital became requisite; ten pounds for every cow's grass must be provided, either in actual possession, or by credit, which in this country is effected in various ingenious modes of barter, &c.; amongst others, notes of hand, payable at three years after date, are given in the purchase of a cow or a horse; now we hold, that even *such* capitalists should have a lease. But when some degree of cultivation has been

established, when a decent house and offices are built, and fields fenced in, then especially the further progress of good farming, and the reclamation of coarse land, should be secured by lease; but although leases are often given for thirty-one years and a life, as mentioned aforegoing, the essential portions of them for the good of the estate, viz. stipulations for improvement, are omitted.

There is a letter from "A Munster Landlord" in "The Times" of October, 1843, complaining of this kind of tenantry, which we quote as under, with some alterations of quantities of acres, to reconcile evident discrepancies, viz.—

"Sir,—I have carefully read your observations, and the numerous letters published in your paper on the Management of Irish Estates, and the question of Landlord and Tenant in that country.

"I now give you a plain statement of facts regarding my estate, and I have no objection to your communicating my name to any *bonâ fide* gentleman who may apply to know it.

"There are hundreds of persons situated, in a greater or lesser degree, exactly as I am; and this statement will, I am convinced, prove to many of your English readers the difficulties which encompass an Irish landlord of the present day, and show the manner in which landlords are treated in that country, where long leases have been granted, and where, in point of fact, the system of fixity of

tenure has been carried out, and how it has worked.

"I possess, in the province of Munster, above 2,500 Irish acres of land, which, computed in English acres, may be set down at 3,800 acres; so, when people talk of high rents in Ireland, they should remember the difference of the size of the acre in the two countries.

"There are on this property about 600 acres of mountain, on which the tenantry have the privilege of grazing and cutting fuel.

"Almost the whole of this estate was let on leases for 61 years, between the years 1780 and 1788. The land generally is excellent for wheat; it was let in farms, varying from 100 to 500 acres each, to one person. There were clauses in the leases, binding down the tenant not to sublet, to build a slate house on his farm, &c. The rent averaged about 11*s.* an acre.

"These lands were, at the commencement of the leases, entirely in grass, with of course but very few inhabitants located on them. Several of these leases have now expired, and the condition of the property is simply this:—The original lessees are totally ruined, and scarcely one of them is residing on any portion of his late farm. The lands are cut up and subdivided into innumerable lots, with paupers generally squatted on them; the ground worked out to the rock. In several places there are more souls than acres; not a slate house built on any one of them; in fact, nothing that could be

called a house exists. It would be very difficult to find five tenants now living on the cultivated ground of 3,000 (English) acres, capable of farming 40 acres properly.

"The facts are these:—During the war from 1792 till 1814, the high price of produce induced those great graziers, who were the original lessees, to sub-let their farms *ad infinitum*. They received for many years 40*s*., 50*s*., and 3*l*. per acre for these subdivisions, besides taking fines. These lessees became middlemen and landlords, lived nobly, kept hounds, &c.; but the peace of course ruined them by the fall of prices, &c. They are gone; but the hordes of paupers remain, and the land is ruined for years to come. I could give names and localities, if required.

"On one farm of 200 acres. Lease for the life of a person, and 61 years in reversion, (he died in 1798, consequently the lease is still in existence.) Rent, 10*s*. per acre. This land is sub-let at from 3*l*. to 4*l*. 10*s*. per acre by the present owners, being near a town; there are 67 thatched cabins on it in one row, inhabited by the very lowest poor people. The lessee was bound by his lease to build a slated house on it. I requested him to do so; the answer was 'it had been done,' and it turned out that it was the District Fever Hospital, built by subscription, which was alluded to!

"So much for long leases or fixity of tenure in Ireland! Neither I nor my predecessor gave these leases. We found things so; we had no power

over the lessees whatever. My predecessor endeavoured by law to have a sort of fair play, but no jury could ever be found to give a verdict for the plaintiff, for they were generally middlemen, in the same predicament with the defendants.

"On a farm of over 400 acres, which has been held for 57 years at a very low rent, the land being worth three times the rent paid, and the lease being about to expire, I was told, if I did not renew it, that part of it, not sub-let, should be covered with squatters, and some of the land has just had four crops taken off it, without one cart load of manure even having been put on it.

"I could multiply cases of this description. I make no comment on these facts; I leave them to the consideration of the English reader.

"I am, Sir,

"Your obedient servant,

"A MUNSTER LANDLORD.

"DUBLIN, *October*, 1843."

In the north, leases are very unusual, less perhaps from any indisposition of the landlords there to give the assurance of certainty to their tenantry, than because of the stamps on and expense of leases operating as a prohibition, under such small holdings as there prevail. The want of leases is, however, greatly against the improvement of land in Ulster, and they are beginning to creep in, where called for by circumstances.

Such, indeed, is the feeling of necessity for some

kind of security, or some mode of remuneration, for the improvements made by an occupying tenant, that a *custom* has grown up throughout the north of Ireland, which has become so prevalent as almost to have the force of law; and indeed the laws founded on custom are amongst the strongest and firmest of all our laws. This custom — called "THE TENANT-RIGHT"— is, for the tenant to sell his interest or goodwill in the farm, although he may have only a yearly tenure; and he introduces the purchaser to the landlord, who is usually accepted as a matter of course. The terms of transfer are often high. They vary from five to fifteen years'—but usually under ten years' purchase on the rent; and a tenant at will, in Donegal, sold his interest in a rent of five shillings per annum for forty pounds, although the purchaser was apprised of the previous intention of the landlord to raise the rent to forty shillings a-year.

Many circumstances have contributed to the establishment of this custom besides the rebellion of '98. The necessity of the case arose out of several considerations, viz.—the general practice of landlords not to give leases; the tenant having to make all improvements entirely at his own expense, and even to provide all buildings, which required, during the prosperity of the weaving employment and linen trade, to be very ample; the absolute necessity, since the failure of cottage weaving, for those who do not wish to emigrate, to obtain possession of land; the landlord's tacit

permission of this transfer, seeing that it operated as an encouragement to improve, without a lease; the difficulty that landlords found themselves under in evicting a tenant for *any* other cause than nonpayment of rent; the means often afforded by the exercise of the tenant-right, to obtain payment of arrears, which of course are discharged by the new comer; the seeming similarity between this transfer and what takes place between an outgoer and incomer in England; the little intercourse of the landlord with his tenant, making it matter of indifference to him who should be his tenant, provided his rent was paid; the probability of a better tenant, and at least the fresh exertions of a new man:—all these, and probably many more reasons and circumstances, arising out of the disturbed state of society in the north about '98; the re-settlement of it since; the change from a flourishing and universal linen trade to a partial, confined, and dull manufacture; the necessity, on these accounts, of attention to agriculture, as a primary object, which before was secondary;—all these have contributed to raise up and sustain this custom, which seems so very extraordinary to an Englishman, although on the whole it is a very useful and wholesome custom, and one founded in reason, equity, and common sense. For, what is the case? A tenant takes a piece of land, usually at a higher rent than the former possessor; he supplies all the buildings, such as they are, and though low in quality, they are necessarily nume-

rous, for, besides mansion, (as the house is here called,) there must still be barn, byre (cattle house), stable, car-shed, cottars' cabins, &c. &c., and in the village linen times, weavers' houses, flax stores, scutching mills, &c., forming altogether a little town; and supposing he did but little to the land, all this outlay could hardly be considered as entirely at the mercy of the landlord, although no lease secured it to the tenant. Legally, *it was* at the landlord's mercy, but equitably, *i.e.* in *moral*, as contradistinguished from *legal equity*, it was not, and the minds of men would have revolted at such a power being assumed. Thus, how true it is, that "law is (or ought to be) the perfection of reason;" and when it is not so, from local peculiarities, the usage of mankind will "rectify" it to the reasonable point. The tenant-right, therefore, has grown up from a mutual sense of justice from man to man; and I heard one of the best landlords in Ireland speak of it with approbation. There are, however, some drawbacks upon its general good effects, inasmuch as the payment tends to cripple the new tenant, and it brings on the estate a stranger, who may not be acceptable to the landlord.

Commissioner Binns speaks of the tenant-right as occasioning the yearly tenant's interest to be sold for twelve or fourteen years' purchase on the rent of *one pound* per acre for poor land. Four-and-a-half Irish acres of poor land, at 1*l.* per acre rent, sold for 60*l.* Seven acres of similar land and

rental, for 100*l.* Three acres and three roods, Irish, at 25*s.* per acre, sold for 60*l.* Six acres, at two guineas per acre, for 170*l.* Six acres, at 10*s.* 6*d.* per acre, for 100*l.* 200*l.* offered for ten acres, at two guineas an acre. On the average of these instances, at least 20*s.* per acre would be added to the rent during a term of twenty-one years, making in some cases three guineas an acre for very moderate land; and if to this we add all the local disadvantages, it will be fully equal to 5*l.* an acre rent on land yielding a *saleable* produce of little more than half that amount, the difference having to be scrambled out by "labour and luck."

It would appear, from the working of the tenant-right, that the rents which admit such enormous premiums in addition to them, cannot be too high; and so the fact is, as far as regards most of the landlords, where the practice prevails; but it is this custom which makes the rents so high, where otherwise they are moderate from the immediate landlord. The fact is, that the prevalent laxity in management of landed property has occasioned such irregularities, that a custom has grown up, by which the tenant makes himself a landlord, and sells the estate; whilst the purchaser regards the real landlord as only a head incumbrancer.

Nothing could possibly have a greater tendency to cure this defect, and restore the landlord to his proper station, than the mode of management which we now suggest.

But things are totally different in the south.

There the occupying tenant has been always called upon to give up the farm, with all he may have done upon it, on the day of the expiration of his holding. It is true, that the smaller tenant, having done as little as he possibly could, consistently with "the bare life," *i. e.* consistently with the means of existence, has but little to give up; yet he must have done *something*, he must have built a cabin, however poor; he must have reclaimed coarse land enough for the supply of his family with potatoes, oats, &c.; and to leave behind him the sweat of his brow and the place of his abode, to begin anew without any compensation, must be heart-breaking, or at least heart-rending, for an Irishman's heart is fortunately made of "sterner stuff" than that implies. Even the better kind of tenants in the south, when they quit a farm at the determination of their holding, leave all the buildings and the land as much "wrecked and racked" as the fear of prosecution for wilful damage to the premises will allow. As to any action for *dilapidations*, it is never thought of, nor is it probable that a verdict would be obtainable, upon any ordinary case of that kind, in any part of Ireland.

Under these general circumstances, we have heard a great deal lately about "fixity of tenure;" but the evident absurdity of that phrase has caused it since to be changed into "equity of tenure," to which phrase, however, no very precise meaning has been yet attached.

The only tangible proposition on this subject is

promulgated in Mr. Sharman Crawford's Bill, the object of which is an Act of Parliament affording to the occupying tenant, without a lease, compensation at quitting for all improvements *made* by him, and *left* for the benefit of the estate. This cannot possibly mean every item of improvement made by a tenant during the whole of his occupancy. That would be confiscation with a vengeance; since, if a tenant reclaimed twenty acres, for instance, of mountain, and increased the value from half-a-crown per acre to one pound, is he to be paid thirty years' purchase on the difference, and so throughout the farm? Surely not, for, in this case, a landlord would have to sell one-half his estate to pay his own tenants for the other. The reasonable effect of this proposition is precisely met by the tenant-right; and we are of opinion, that every good and reasonable purpose intended by this Bill would be answered, if the tenant-right were legalized, under certain restrictions.

Thus, upon a tenant at will being called upon to quit by his landlord, under legal notice, or wishing to quit, and producing a substitute tenant, to whom the landlord cannot substantiate any reasonable objection, it should be left to the saying of two neutral persons, one on each side, or of the umpire appointed by those two, what sum should be paid for tenant-right to the outgoing tenant, with power of appeal from that award, by either party, to some summary and inexpensive jurisdiction, say the assistant-barrister, who should have

fees on all such business. But in order to check any inordinate sums being given by private bargain, to the injury both of the new tenant and of the landlord, by his tenant's impoverishment, the landlord should not be bound to accept any tenant, however eligible, and might deem him a trespasser, unless these forms were gone through, after which the former tenant should be a trespasser. This Act not, however, to be applicable to any lease for a term of years; the solemn act and contract entered into by such a document to be left untouched.

To attempt the regulation of such a matter by many particulars, would only be introducing intricacies, difficulties, and disputes, but some general rules may be supplied for the guidance of the referees.—It might be laid down, in the Act,—that no improvements should be taken into account, *the full benefit of which the outgoing tenant has already enjoyed,* but *only* so much as he has *not* enjoyed, *say those done within the last four years*;—that, as to buildings, they shall only be taken at four years' purchase of the additional annual value which they give to the estate, deducting so much as would put them in good repair; also,—that so much should be deducted from every improvement, as the landlord shall have contributed thereto; and—that no tenant-right shall in any case exceed seven years' present net rent; but the tillage, manurings, seedings, hay, straw, and unused manure, should be separately paid for, by valuation of the referees, as an

encouragement to the good husbandry of the tenant, and because the incomer will be too happy to find these essentials on the spot, instead of having to create some, and introduce others; the rent to be taken at the amount proved by acquittances, to the referee's satisfaction, to have been *bonâ fide* paid or settled by the immediate occupier, on the average of the last seven years. Some will doubtless smile at the idea of such a valuation on a Munster mountain farm at will; or an eight-acre holding in Ulster; but let them recollect, that what is a mite to some, is of great importance to others.

Now, let us calmly consider, what will be the practical use of such a Bill as Mr. Sharman Crawford's. As a gratification to those senators who must be debating, though not doing anything, it will be useful. As a sop to the Cerberus of Irish discontent, it will be useless, and worse; because it will be only taken as a mockery of relief, and will be mistaken for a bribe to do that, on what they will call easy terms, which they will too probably soon be instructed not to do on *any* terms, viz. quit the land, and give quiet possession.—In the south, where only it is wanted, it will never be understood, and probably never practised. No change will indeed be understood, approved, or practised, in the south, but "reduction of high rents;" and this, we do not advocate directly, but only by allowances for improvement, manure, &c., particularly draining, and liming, as explained further on. In

the north, it will never be *liked* by the tenants, because they do as well or better already. As one, however, of a series of legislative measures, having for their object the amendment of the relation of landlord and tenant, it would be well that such a Bill do pass. Every little helps. Besides, some stir has already been made in this matter; some expectations have been formed of its good effects; and the Minister, through its medium, is pledged to consider the whole subject of landlord and tenant. Again, as a single enactment, it might be still-born; but as one of a number of remedial measures, it may attract attention, and do good. Its positive effect will, we fear, be *nil*, as a portion of "Justice to Ireland;" but its *tendencies* may be better, and *tendency is too little regarded* in legislation, as well as in life. We think it will *tend* to induce the landlords to grant leases, rather than have their property dealt with by others, almost without their consent, and to the exclusion of their fair expectations of advance of rent; for how can they advance upon a new tenant, who has just paid a premium of seven years' rent? or how can he pay the advance, if made? It may tend to check those clearances on a large scale, which have, I think, been more bitterly complained of, than the facts warrant, either in extent or atrocity.—(Still in a district, north-west of Monaghan, Commissioner Binns mentions 230 ejectment decrees being issued between 1827 and 1833; 120 families were ejected near Sligo, and 160 more near Cavan, in

1826—and other instances of "clearance.")—A landlord would hesitate to buy out a large district thickly peopled, or to sell one-half of his estate, to get possession of the other. It may indeed tend to check improvements, by inducing landlords to prefer unimproving tenants, or restrain improvements lest he should have to pay for them.—On the other hand, it may tend to dispose the tenants to rest on their yearly tenure, keeping the lands and buildings entirely at their own mercy, and avoiding any binding covenants for preservation, management, or otherwise, such as any business-like lease would contain; and besides this, by changing often, they might, not only contrive to sell their improvements, but also the chance of advanced rent, to which the landlord is fairly entitled after the lapse of years, should times permit.

Those of the Irish landlords, who give no leases, quote the English landlords of the north, and west, and the midland and southern counties, as their example; but they do not perceive that although those districts in which tenantcy at will prevails, are well enclosed and tolerably cultivated, they are more backward and deficient in the most essential of all permanent improvements, than any other districts, viz. under-draining. The natural fertility of the red marle formation, ensured its early cultivation, and landlords thought they had only to keep it so, whilst they might preserve the tight rein over their tenants. I believe they are

in general ridden with even an easier bit, than tenants of the leasing districts, but " thorough draining, and subsoil ploughing," cannot be done without leases, at least by the tenants; and the landlord who undertakes to do them himself may be an adept at artificial machinery, but must be wholly ignorant of the natural machine, consisting of mind as well as body, not considering the effect of the landlord's mind operating on one hundred tenants' minds, inducing the latter to set in motion each one a number of " hands," to a certain end, or purpose, and not regarding what is of more consequence than all, the interest which every man takes, and the stake he feels, in what he himself directs, or thinks that he directs.

We know by experience, " of a truth," that the true mode of letting lands which have assumed the character of farms, both for landlord and tenant, is by lease, for terms of years certain. And this is peculiarly applicable to Ireland, where so much improvement of every kind is requisite; especially leases containing reasonable and sensible stipulations, suited to the local and other circumstances of the case—stipulations which can be and are likely to be fulfilled; in fact, such and such only as it is the interest of the lessee to fulfil, and which he knows and feels it will be his loss to neglect. Any other stipulations are at least futile, if not foolish; futile, because they are a dead letter, and encumber the document—foolish, because, being necessarily neglected themselves, they bring all the rest into

neglect and even contempt. A sensible lease is the text-book of a sensible tenant. It reminds him of what he has engaged to do, and of what his interest and his duty to his family, as well as to his landlord, requires him to do; but a bad lease prompts him to disregard it altogether.

In England, leases are prevalent, and the terms of years are long, in proportion to the degree of improvement required. Thus, in the naturally fertile, and highly-cultivated districts, yearly tenures prevail; in less improved districts, terms of seven or eight years are common; and where much outlay and large improvements are to be made, twenty-one years have been granted; but until lately, the most usual term has been fourteen years.

In Ireland, what we have denominated *sensible leases* would work the most valuable results to the landowners, and the most important consequences to the country. The present rentals cannot indeed be sustained without a very general adoption of leases, and those containing arrangements for improvement, in which the landlord must bear a part, both in their cost and direction. We shall describe these arrangements generally, under the next head of our Essay; at present, we have only to vindicate leases, and to recommend their adoption, even on small holdings; since we know that the LANDLORD is benefited by a lease, in the adjustment and definition of specific conditions with his tenant; in the consequent prevention of vagueness, lead-

ing to disputes and unreasonable expectations; in the certainty of improvements on the property, and of advance of rent, at the expiration of the term, or at least the property "holding its own," in any times. This escape from a decline of rent, is an equivalent to an advance of rent; whilst a period is fixed for such an advance, the tenant expects it as a matter of course. A landlord, indeed, finds that it is seldom, if ever, worth his while to enforce by law such part of the covenants as a tenant may neglect; and that a bad tenant is still the more difficult to get rid of, by having a lease. But these are only the alloy, which bears but a small proportion to the gold. That the general effect of sensible leases is to make good tenants, to ensure punctual payment of reasonable rents, and to increase the value of estates, I am enabled to aver, from above thirty years' extensive practical experience of their effects, in Ireland as well as in England, in both which countries I have created, and am creating, thousands per annum of rental value, by means of them.

To the TENANT a lease is valuable, by the security it affords for himself or family reaping the fruit of his exertions under all "the changes and chances of this transitory life;" by the encouragement and stimulus to exertion which this security affords; by the respectability it implies, in the eyes of *his* little world; and by the facility it gives of obtaining the pecuniary assistance of his relatives or friends, in carrying out his plans.

What, in fact, would have been the condition of England, without leases? How could the barren rabbit sands of Norfolk have been "clayed" at 100 cube yards per acre, and "drained" so as to produce forty bushels of barley, and thirty bushels of wheat per acre, over extensive tracts, on which, before these operations, as the late Lord Leicester said to the writer, "three rabbits might be seen fighting for a blade of grass?" How could the stubborn London clays of Essex and Suffolk have been underdrained at four yards apart, and repeated during every lease of 14 years? How could the sterile Chalk hills stretching from Cambridgeshire to Dorsetshire, or the bleak Oolitic hills from those about the Vale of Pickering to the Mendip Hills, have been rendered so productive, but by leases? It is by leases alone that the capital, intelligence, the enterprise and exertions of the English farmer have been called into action; and it must be by leases alone, that the intelligence, the activity, and the indomitable animal spirits of the Irish will be brought into play, to the end that the natural riches of their fine country may be developed for the comfort and happiness of themselves.

It is for the Irish landlords to afford the opportunity for this development of the agrarial resources of Ireland; and may the Providence which rules the destinies of men, take from their hearts and minds all those petty sources of reluctance which have their root in the proneness of man to tyrannise over man, disposing these sublunary

arbiters of the poor man's fate to look with pity on his condition, to afford him *every* means of bettering it; and amongst those means may *leases* abound! This would be a kind of charity at least twice blessed, "blessing him who gives, and who receives."

But, under the present circumstances of landlord and tenant in Ireland, leases, to be effectual, must contain stipulations for the supply of those essentials, of which the agrarial state of the country stands so lamentably in need, viz. occupation, roads, buildings, drains, and fences, also shelter. This cannot be done by the tenant *only*, although he will do much. The landlord must bear a part. Reason, equity, and humanity are the moral calls for such a participation; and the backward state of the country, the privations endured by the people, and the present state of the public mind, are the practical calls for the landlords and tenants to "join," and to "make a long pull, a strong pull, and a pull altogether" for their mutual interest and benefit.

But, although the granting of leases at all, and of good and sensible leases in particular, must be an act of the landlord, which the legislature cannot directly either enforce, or control; yet the Government may indirectly encourage them; and for this purpose we propose—

That only a nominal *ad valorem* stamp-duty shall be imposed on leases of not exceeding 21 years in Ireland, say threepence in the pound on

rents under 50*l.* a year; fourpence halfpenny in the pound on rents of 50*l.* to 100*l.*, and sixpence in the pound on rents of 100*l.*, increased sixpence in the pound on every subsequent 100*l.* of rent. This ratio may perhaps increase the duty on the higher rents; but we think these can afford such a duty as mentioned, and may make some amends for the loss on the smaller rents.

Stamps of every kind bear too hard on the poorer class of farmers in Ireland, who are always under the necessity of borrowing money to make timely payments. Thus the late additional duty on the stamp on notes of hand is severely felt in low times. It is true that the smaller and more frequent transactions raise the revenue, but regard should be had to the poverty of the people, and the money should be raised off the richer classes, for whom the poor labour.

In leases containing stipulations for allowances towards improvements, the rents on which the stamp-duty is chargeable should be taken as less the annual amount of those allowances.

Leases for terms above 21 years should be subject to additional duties of 5*s.* for every year above 21 years, each life introduced being taken at 20 years.

The stamps should be adhesive, like those of the Post-office, and sold like them separately.

In many places it is difficult to obtain lease stamps, and expense to the tenant is incurred in

sending leases to Dublin to be stamped. One hundred leases may be sent, and the attorney may charge a separate fee on each. If adhesive stamps were used, they might come in a letter, or be always found at the nearest post-office. Every thing possible should be done to lessen the expense of leases on small holdings; and we do not consider that this would in any practical degree discourage large holdings.

Any sum paid by or for the tenant, as and for lease money, procuration money, or otherwise, as a gratuity to the agent or other person, for or upon getting the lease, should be deemed and taken in law as rent paid by the tenant, who should be entitled to get credit for it accordingly. Much has already been said on this subject. This clause respecting lease money would of course be evaded; but the existence of such a law would, in some degree, *check* the practice.

Actions for breach of covenant, not amounting to determination of the term, should be cognizable by the assistant-barrister, in all cases under 50*l.* rent. It seems requisite, that both landlord and small tenant should possess some less expensive appeal to law respecting non-performance of covenants by either party under lease, than the Nisi Prius Courts of Record, which, to the small tenant, are, as was remarked of "The London Tavern," open to all who have money to pay their way. Perhaps disputes might be settled in the sum-

mary way here suggested, by the barrister's order to do such and such things, or to pay such and such monies, or for the landlord to allow so much in rent, in default of his engagements. And the assistant-barrister might make reference of the case to some local barrister, by which means the justice of the case might be met, without disproportionate expense.

Leases of under 50*l.* a-year rent should only be determinable by the efflux of time, by the non-payment of rent reserved, not being less than one year, and by no sufficient distress on the premises for rent due; the facts being cognizable by the assistant-barrister, and his decision final. It is thought that power to vacate a lease of small rent might reside in this summary jurisdiction, without loss to either party, since the landlord cannot at present obtain a vacation of the term under any other circumstances; and this process would enable him to get rid of a bad tenant sooner and cheaper than the present law, and is no hardship on such a tenant.

Dilapidations at the end of the term should be also cognizable before the same tribunal, on leases of 50*l.* rent. The assistant-barrister must not, however, be overloaded with business, and for all these additional duties he ought to have additional fees.

What we recommend aforegoing, relative to the reference of rents to a septennial valuation, and

the restriction of ejectments thereupon, will also tend to encourage leases. And the desire of the legislature to favour leases and discourage tenantcy at will, once established as matter of sound policy, many modes for its accomplishment will, from time to time, develope themselves.

CHAPTER V.

OF THE OBJECTIONS TO LEASES.

BUT the granting of leases is not without objections, raised by various descriptions of persons.

1. One asks,—What is the use of leases as securities for any improvement whatever, since numberless are the instances of failure beside that of "the Munster Landlord?" Indeed, who ever knew or heard of any improvements under the longest term of lease, except those which the necessary means of subsistence induce the immediate occupiers to make? and these entail an intolerable burthen on the land in the shape of a pauper population, which can neither be got rid of nor borne.—The answer to this objection is obvious, viz.:—Mere long leases are injurious, on the principle that there is "time enough," and that "procrastination is the thief of time." Is it not, we ask in our turn, preposterously unreasonable to expect of those who have no previous talent or taste for improvement, to become improvers merely because they have obtained the "encourage-

ment" of a "long lease?" because you have enabled them to say to themselves, "Well! I needn't hurry, now I have time enow before me, and the longer I delay building the slated house, the more value it'll be to the lessor?"

Therefore the lessee sets about getting a little "profit-rent out of the place," before he commences the improvements so eloquently expatiated on before he got the lease. The temporary profit-rent induces extravagant habits of living, and whether or no the profit-rents dependent on high times fail, the lessee's means of improvement fail with them. The lease runs on, and, however long, has an end, (unless for ever, which is a species of alienation not herein contemplated,) when the lessor too late perceives his mistake, and finds himself in possession of an impoverished estate, loaded with pauper occupiers. Whereas, had he granted what we have called aforegoing "a sensible lease," *i.e.* one not so long as to give the idea of "time enough to begin ten or twenty years hence," and yet time enough to reap the benefit of improvements, if begun directly with determined energy, he might have had an improved estate at the end of such a lease of say twenty-one years. But although we consider long leases to be against the improvement of farms and lands, by causing and encouraging the delay of those improvements, a broad distinction must be drawn between leases of farms and leases of building grounds in towns, a distinction which would appear to be superfluous,

if we did not know of its neglect in some very important cases, particularly one, in which the prosperity of a city (Londonderry,) is much retarded by its landlords, (the Irish Society,) though they are peculiarly bound and anxious to promote that prosperity, declining to give leases of sufficient length to encourage the building of anything great, substantial, or permanent, together with the establishment of business connected therewith. This is a mistake, since a large outlay will not and cannot be made without the security of a long term of enjoyment; and the plan for such outlay should be laid down, and specifications drawn up, and sureties given for its fulfilment, before the lease is granted, which in such cases ought not to be less than 100 years for every 1000*l.* laid out. But of what use can it be expecting improvements at all from those tenants who have no more notion of the proper modes of improvements than they have of the methods of finding the longitude, "Oh! (but say this class of objectors) we have granted leases only to born *gentlemen*, who have discoursed eloquently on the subject, not only as regarded their own interests and ours, but also as regarded the more important subject of 'the improvement of Ireland.'" So you have, and what then? They have seen their own interest in a different point of view, disregarded yours, and left the improvement of Ireland to the wisdom of the nation "in parliament assembled," as soon as they have got your lease, or even "an accepted proposal," for the expense of a lease would be too

much drawback to their anticipated gains. They have without delay turned over part of their "right, title, and interest," to persons who have not sufficient notion of improvements even to discourse upon them, and whose only "notion" on the matter is their "daily bread" in the shape of potatoes. But what else could we have done with unimproved lands? Why you could and ought to have selected proper persons, who would have really done, for the sake of their families, what the others only talked of. You could have let the lands in such lots only as were suitable to the wants, the means, and energies of each. You could have stipulated for such and such kinds of improvement, as to building, fencing, and draining, as well as liming or other manuring. You would have made yourself a party to all these improvements, by taking a certain share of each on yourself, in consideration of which your rent would have been augmented. Whereas now you have given an "encouraging," *i. e.* a long lease with all improvements *to be* done by tenant; your rent has been proportionably diminished, because the tenant would of course advert to the vast benefit of his intended improvements, and yet *nothing done*, but absolute *waste and spoliation*. It is therefore not against leases that the objection of *failure* lies, but against *improper*, i. e. *long leases without proper stipulations*.

2. Another says; I object to leases, because they are in practice binding on the landlord, but

not on the tenant; since the tenant wriggles out of his obligations, either by insolvency, or by some other means, so that legal redress is either abortive or inexpedient, whilst the landlord is held bound under all circumstances. Now this position may be true of such tenants as were either insolvent at the period of taking the lease, or have become so during its continuance, but not to such tenants as we contemplate, viz. those who are systematically improvers. If you let your lands to improper persons, or at too high rents, insolvency may ensue, and that is "above the law;" nay, in a number of tenants, some even of the best, the most industrious, and the most frugal, will sometimes be unfortunate, and you will find yourself bound to certain terms and stipulations, whilst they are unable to fulfil theirs. But surely these exceptions to the rule are not to decide the policy, propriety, and expediency of granting leases. Because a banker, even *our* banker fails, are we to forego the conveniences of a bank? Because we happened to be robbed on the highway, are we never more to travel? Things of this sort must be taken in the general. The effect on the whole and "in the long run" must be our guide, not insulated instances. Now, in at least ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, a greater or less degree of prosperity, or certainly solvency, will follow such "sensible" leases as we recommend, if the stipulations thereof are but moderately well looked to, as to their due performance.

3. The next objection to leases is, that they tie up property, prevent changes of the lands for the benefit of the estate, and hinder any advance of rents, should times become high, the rate of living increased to the landlord, or the tenant enabled to pay more. But it was well observed by the late Lord Liverpool, that "landlords cannot enjoy incompatible advantages." You cannot have the benefits of leases, whilst you require a power over your lands, the exercise of which is seldom required, seldom desirable, and seldom practicable. And under what we call "sensible leases," your property is only "tied up" for a time, and that a reasonable time, to be loosed again with ample interest for your temporary deprivation of a fancied absolute power over it; for the power of a landlord over his tenant at will is so hampered and fettered by the shield of protection from oppression, which the law interposes; by the dictates of humanity; by the difficulties of ejectment; by the custom of the country; by public opinion, and the like; that the tenancy at will exists almost but in name, and where "tenant-right" is established, it is almost a tenancy at the will of the tenant. Still, however, it is said that leases bind a landlord more than a tenant, seeing that the former is sure to be called on to fulfil all his engagements. And so he ought, seeing that he should not at the first enter into any engagement not immediately or remotely to his own advantage, nor would he so under what we call a sensible lease.

4. That property under lease is too much out of the control of a landlord, is nearly a similar "count" to the foregoing objections; but it may be answered by the remark, that the sensible lease would afford control enough for any reasonable landlord, by means of the arrangements it would make for improvement; and the constant surveillance it gives, constitutes a control highly beneficial to the property, and quite sufficient to satisfy any landlord.

5. The objection that the desire for a lease on the part of the tenant indicates want of confidence towards the landlord, is an extremely unfounded and injurious conclusion, and will not operate permanently on a generous mind, though when leases, and consequently important improvements are unusual, it may at first appear so.

The tenant virtually says to a landlord, when he requests a lease; "Sir, I have the utmost confidence in the honour, the fair dealing, and the good feeling of yourself and family, but you may die, or sell or exchange the property. In the one case, trustees and guardians may feel it their bounden duty, as it will be so, to make the most they can. I intend or wish to do a good deal, and what I do may be taken advantage of under that sense of duty, since trustees cannot recognise any *verbal* understanding between us. In the case of sale or exchange, the new possessor will consider himself the purchaser of any improvements, and immediately entitled to the *increased* value of the

property, which they create; so that I shall in that case be paying for *my own* labour and expenditure. The permanent improvements I wish to make, or which you may wish me to make, will take several years to accomplish; some time must elapse before I can reap any considerable benefit from them; so that a shorter period of certainty than twenty-one years will not allow me fair time to perform what I intend, and will stipulate, to do; or a chance to obtain the return of my money and interest thereon, before the end of the term, when the benefit of my improvements will become yours, and I shall expect to pay an increased rent, in consequence of the increased value of the property." To this the landlord may reply:—"No! I do not choose to tie up my property. If I give you a lease, you may vote against my wish and interest at the next election, perhaps against myself. I shall keep you "under my thumb;" and as to your permanent improvements, if you make any, which I much doubt, you must have confidence in me not to take any unfair advantage of you on that or any other account. If you have no such confidence, you are no fit tenant of mine."—The Irish tenant will become alarmed at this reply, swear "his honour's" word to be as good, nay, better than any lease, protest his unshaken fealty, declare his "intention" to build "an iligant house and offices," reclaim all the "coarse land," underdrain and subsoil all the "arable;" and, according to Mr. Smith of Deanston's last lecture, takes an oath "by the

powers" and as he hopes for salvation, that he'll "have no delay" with his improvements, depending upon his honour entirely—goes home, and does nothing. Perhaps indeed "the friend" who was to lend the money for carrying out this improvement fit, does not deem it secure without the lease, any more than the tenant himself. Perhaps his friend intended the loan as the means of ultimately becoming possessed of the farm for himself, seeing that the tenant had "gone mad entirely" about improving.

But if the landlord be humane and reasonable, he will reply somewhat after this fashion:—"My good fellow, I have every reason to consider you as a respectable tenant, as far as your holding extends, and one that will fulfil your engagements to the best of your ability. Now, if you can satisfy the agent that you have the means at your disposal to make any such permanent improvements on your farm as you mention, I shall have no objection to give you a lease for twenty-one years, depending on your own good sense to vote as I may wish, seeing that I must know best which of the candidates is most likely to promote the local interests and those of the country at large. I shall also depend on you to preserve my game and my woods, and to conform to my reasonable wishes as much with a lease as without, and there are many reasons to make this worth your while. But as life and health are uncertain, and even good conduct and character may change, you must settle

with the agent what improvements you undertake to make, describing them on paper, and also what allowances I am to give you towards them, and my attorney will concoct these particulars into a lease, together with the usual covenants of habendum, reddendum, and management; and let me caution you that, when you have signed this lease, after duly understanding and considering its obligations, I shall certainly eject you for non-performance if there's 'law in Ireland.'" The tenant will in this case be eloquent in thanks and profuse in promises, nor will his utmost ability and most strenuous exertions be wanting to fulfil those promises.

6. I have known landlords in Ireland object to leases, on the score that "they (the tenants) spit in your face as soon as they've got them;" or, in other words, that their behaviour changes to a lesser degree of civility than before, and that they exhibit a degree of independence disgusting to a landlord. Now the fact cannot be denied, that the granting of a lease of thirty-one years, with one or more lives, in the usual way, does induce a certain feeling of independence, so far that the tenant feels himself in possession of the estate, and the landlord out of it, for so long a period, that it seems to both an absolute alienation, and is mostly so indeed, rarely otherwise, for the period of both their lives. Hence a latent feeling on the part of the tenant, whether he expresses it or not, that the landlord has little or nothing to do with the estate, "no call to it," but as security for the rent; and as such

leases seldom contain any stipulations for improvement, beyond the building of a "slated house," and for this there is "time enough," the landlord has by such a lease placed himself very nearly in the situation imagined by the tenant, who has certainly a "fixity of tenure," *quoad* the term granted, and feels and acts as *bonâ fide* landlord.

Not so with the sensible lease, *i. e.* for twenty-one years certain, with stipulations for specific improvements, to be done and performed by the joint efforts, and at the joint expense, of both landlord and tenant. These bring the parties constantly together, and the feeling that each or either *may* witness the expiration of *two* such leases, keeps the tenant under a due sense of his dependence on his landlord.

7. The difficulty of getting rid of a bad tenant under a lease is often quoted against leases. But really this difficulty is much the same in Ireland under a yearly tenancy, as under a lease. An ejectment of an occupying tenant for any other cause than non-payment of rent, is seldom heard of in Ireland; and, indeed, since the usual leases contain scarcely any other covenant than the reddendum, scarcely any other ground exists; and where there is *any* beneficial interest during a *long term*, the "equity of redemption" is almost sure to be acted on, and in the north a douceur is added by the landlord for quiet possession. In almost any case, therefore, the only way to get rid of a bad tenant, except for non-payment of rent, and in

very many cases for that also, is to buy him out.

But all these difficulties vanish under our sensible lease. By that, even a bad tenant is made better, and an indifferent one is made a good one; since it is impossible to conceive any one so stupid as not to avail himself more or less of the real encouragement and helps to increase his produce and to improve his condition, which are the essence and aim of such leases. And the very last thing a tenant will be guilty of under such a lease, is anything that might lead to its forfeiture.

CHAPTER VI.

OF ASSISTING TENANTS TO MAKE IMPROVEMENTS.

We come now to the third grand head of our discourse, viz. those "Encouragements" towards improvements of the land, which are imperatively required by the present state of the Irish tenantry. On this subject we shall be as brief as we can, since "a word to the wise is enough;" but we may say generally, that the Irish landlords are more "at sea" on this than on any other point relating to landed property, for the erroneous excess of rents is purely mistaken selfishness. Not that Irish landlords are averse from improvements; not that they hesitate to expend money largely on them; but that they mistake the mode of improving, and spend in ostentatious displays what ought to be appropriated to the increase of produce on their tenants' farms. This error was evidently fallen into by the London Companies, when they first became possessed of their estates, on the expiration of their long leases. They built streets of houses, some of cut stone,

churches, meeting-houses, schools, agents' mansions, hotels, market-places, sessions-houses; and they planted woods, and made roads through them; but they did little for the *lands*. Latterly, however, this error has been seen, and they are attending, and more especially the Grocers, to the assistance of their tenants in the manner we now advocate. But, generally, the landlords in Ireland are fond of something that shows itself, and proclaims "the great man" near, so that "great works" more than "good works" are the order of the day; whilst the more substantial helps to tenants, which ought from day to day, and from year to year, to keep on "the noiseless tenor of their way," are either wholly neglected, or, if taken up warmly for a season, soon dropped as unamusing, if not condemned as profitless, with the first check, the first instance of ingratitude, or the first specimen of intractability. Some make the early discovery that improving for, or by means of, their tenants, is expensive without *immediate* return, and discontinue it at once. Others will not improve at all, unless they can hit upon a plan quite different from that of their neighbours, however successful they may have been. Whilst some *set about* doing everything themselves, and, stopping short, leave houses unfinished, fences unclosed, and fields untilled, all useless to any one. Such improvers, ardent at first, are apt soon to acquire a distaste for improvements,—the word becomes hateful to their ears,—and they spend the remainder of their

days in quizzing improving landlords, and demonstrating that what they are doing is folly, and "can never pay."

Shakspere describes such men thus:—

> "But hollow men, like a horse hot at hand,
> Makes gallant show and promise of his mettle;
> But when he should endure the bloody spur,
> He falls his crest, and, like a deceitful jade,
> Sinks in the struggle."

Some content themselves with the thought that "the thing will improve itself," letting their lands somewhat below the ordinary rents of the country, on thirty-one years and lives, the usual result of which is, that they are relet to a wretched tenantry to secure a *profit rent*, on which the lessee vegetates in idle mockery of gentility.

The jealousy of improvers one of another is also quite ridiculous. Every one condemns the operations of his neighbour. Nothing is praised, and if anything is imitated, it is so mangled that the essence of its good is lost. All improvements are first condemned, then, if they answer, the merit of their recommendation is claimed by the very parties who condemned them.

One would think that the force of example would tend to secure the rapid spread of any successful modes of management, but this depends entirely on the degree of enlightenment existing in the neighbourhood. Thus, in one part of the south, an excellent young landlord had just commenced adopting the mode found good on a

mountain property, when he died, and his successors being differently circumstanced, continued for a time, but soon dropped it. Another young landlord, whose adoption would have spread the system largely, was persuaded to neglect and deride it. But not so in the north, where the enlightenment has been sufficient to induce an imitation of the good mode, although the liberality has not been sufficient to prevent the claim of originality being made, or at least its credits and rewards being received by the copyists — *n'importe*, so long as the thing is done. More than once I have known very sensible modes of proceeding adopted after the greatest ridicule of them by parties who have

> "But in appearance cried them down,
> To make them better seem their own,
> Resolved to follow the advice,
> But keep it perdue by disguise,
> And after stubborn contradiction,
> To counterfeit his own conviction,
> And by transition fall upon
> The resolution as his own."

I have more than once seen persons forming a group around an oracle of this sort, detailing with an important and knowing air the very opinions one of these persons had given a day or two before. But the time and place do not often admit of one's exclaiming, "That's my thunder!" This reminds me of the two artizans who went together to the late Sir William Congreve, to claim the prior invention of the Congreve rockets; each asserting himself to

be the first inventor. "Gentlemen," said he, "settle the priority between ye, and I'll take the conqueror."

After all,

> "One self-approving thought whole years outweighs
> Of stupid starers and of loud huzzas."

The want of liberality amongst landlords one towards another, arising probably out of this jealousy, is quite surprising. Thus, a landlord having an inexhaustible quantity of limestone, will not let another have it who is short of that article, nor will he allow his tenants to sell lime, and quarries of flags "for the world" are churlishly shut up against improvers. Candour also in Ireland is thought a great weakness. Even in Government Reports on Roads, the erection of lime kilns, and a good description of houses, is taken as entirely owing to the roads. But the reporter must have known that they were owing to allowances for lime and houses made by the landlord, although they could not or would not have been built without the road. This is Irish justice, and corresponds to that of the Sublime Porte, which made the Isle of Candia pay the price of a Turkish frigate wrecked thereon, upon the plea, that if the isle had not been there, the frigate could not have been wrecked upon it.

But the true genuine and effective improver of estates in Ireland takes a very different course from any of these.—He is not unmindful that the tenant's prosperity and his own rent can only come out of

the produce of the soil, and his efforts are therefore directed to the improvement of the soil for the increase of its produce. He reflects on the utter impossibility of his doing this at his own expense, over perhaps many thousand acres and some hundreds of farms, the mere cost of superintendence of which would be enormous; and he feels that, by setting every one of the tenants to work as an improver of his own farm, he brings into the field an army to effect his purpose, an army not only of hands but of heads, aye, and of hearts also, that will not only zealously carry his views into effect for their own benefit and advantage, but also feel so attached to the buildings they have erected, and the lands they have improved, that they will thereafter eagerly fulfil *all* their obligations, rather than run the slightest hazard of losing the result of their own labours. A good general makes use of his officers, according to their individual degrees of talent, experience and enterprise. He does not attempt to fight the battle by single combat; nor does he even confine himself to the *élite*, the Horatii and the Curatii. In like manner the landlord should set to work "at all arms," knowing that "many hands make light work," and that "small strokes fell great oaks." Thus he would accomplish great things by the aggregate of many little efforts; but in many cases, the aggregate is of many efforts on the large scale, when great things are accomplished in little ime.

To effect this, he first arranges the lands into

proper and suitable farms, and this is not only an important but a difficult matter, since there is nothing so galling to a tenant, as to lose his land, especially to a neighbour. This process, however, must be accomplished without fear or favour.

He will next grant leases to all the eligible tenants, at by no means easy rents in fact, though easy in comparison to the excessive rents complained of, but with positive stipulations to allow to the amount of 10 or 15 per cent. of the rent, or more, as the case may require, towards such improvements as *underdraining*, *liming*, and *fencing*, done by the tenant to the satisfaction of the agent, such allowance amounting to not more than three-fourths of the cost or value of such improvements. He will also establish some arrangements to assist the tenants in providing themselves with the requisite buildings, by giving doors and windows to some, floors and roofs to others, together with bricks for the chimneys, openings, and quoins, unless the stone of the country be very well adapted to these purposes. To some he will allow slates for the roof; others must be content with thatch. On some estates a different mode of assistance will be rendered, viz. a money allowance out of rent, towards the buildings which may be put up by the tenants with the stone of the country and the timber of the bogs, covered with the straw grown on the farm.

Every one has his own mode of improving, and these modes differ not only with the taste and views of each individual landlord or his agent, but

also necessarily with the local circumstances of each estate. What I advocate generally, is allowances out of rent for works done *by the tenants* on the land, and some assistance towards the buildings. If the farms are out of the line of public roads, new lines of road must be made at the private expense of the landlord, for without these nothing valuable can be done.

It is the general want hitherto of such arrangements as these, that has constituted the poverty and misery so prevalent in Ireland. We have great reason to fear that the old coercive rack-rent system can no longer be safely continued, and that some such arrangements as the above must be adopted throughout the country. It would require a volume to go into the detail of such arrangements; but this I can say as to their policy,—that an experience of above thirty years enables me to state positively and decidedly, that under these arrangements, and notwithstanding their expense and apparent diminution of the rent, I have obtained more *ready money*, during a twenty-one years' lease, out of a large tract of country, than was ever before extracted, or, I believe, could have been extracted by the old and still general rack-rent system. Besides which, I have advanced the rental value of the estate by at least *one-third more*, which will cheerfully be paid, even in these low times. The adjoining estate to this is lower rented and more favourably circumstanced, but for want of *roads* and other encouragements, it is going

back. Is not this inducement enough for the landlords of Ireland to adopt these arrangements, putting it on the lowest footing, viz. the *pecuniary* one; but when to that we add the *moral* inducements of duty and humanity, and still higher, the *religious* one of accountability to their God for the conduct they observe towards those whose welfare God has placed in their hands, surely such of the landlords of Ireland as may "think of these things" will adopt the course we now so strenuously recommend.

At all events, as those whose rents are *too* high *must do something*, let them at least commence by *allowances for improvements*, instead of abatements of rent, unless such rents are so scandalously high, that it becomes disgraceful to call for them in any way, and then they should do both.

It will be very fairly asked, "Is there to be no consideration for the landlord as well as for the tenant? Look at the story of 'The Munster Landlord,' before quoted, and say, if tenants are wretched, are not landlords to be pitied?" Yes! but for what? Why, for that degree of inchoate civilization that could grant such leases as the ancestors of the Munster landlord did, forgetting that "time enough" breeds procrastination, which is "the thief of time." Had a sensible lease, with a term of twenty-one years, been given with strict covenants as to the specific things which were to be done in the way of improvement, and these covenants enforced, this property would have been

an highly cultivated tract. Still, let us be just, even to our ancestors. Those of the Munster landlord granted these leases between 1780 and 1788, very low times indeed for landed property, even in England; very disturbed and uncertain times in Ireland. This was before the period of cattle being allowed to be imported from Ireland into England, and long before the free admission of Irish corn. There was a rental of 1,375*l.* a-year placed on the security of the "great graziers," in times of so much depression, that it is more than probable "the ancestors," not being able to look into futurity, thought it a great thing to secure such a rental, and that the longer the lease the better. In covenanting against sub-letting, and to have "a slated house" built on each lot or farm, the ancestors made what must have appeared to them *at that period* a great provision for the improvement of the property; and if there was no process of law by which such covenants could be enforced, it is high time there should be some such process instituted. Doubtless, the length of lease was thought to be sufficient encouragement to improvement, but the fallacy of this notion is demonstrated daily; and it is found in practice, that on a thirty-one years' lease, with a life or lives, the tenant, having "time enough," puts himself into a thatched house, to which habit reconciles him, and "the slated house" is never built. It is the same with other kinds of improvement; and we speak from experience, in saying that the best term for a

lease in Ireland is twenty-one years certain, as that makes it necessary for a tenant to bestir himself "from the post," *i.e.* from the commencement; but that it is also necessary to *specify* what improvements are to be done by both parties, and that both parties, *i.e.* landlord and tenant, should take part in *every* improvement, to ensure its performance.

But it will still be fairly enough asked, "What is a landlord to do under the circumstances of the Munster landlord?" Why, he can do nothing but select the best of his bad tenants, set out farms for them, and endeavour to make them better by allowances for or rather *towards* buildings, drains, underdraining, fencing, and liming, under a system that may be applicable to the peculiar case, and secured to them by lease. Of the rest, some must be bought out; some sent out as emigrants; and others made cottars to the farms. Any other mode of clearance would be barbarous and inhuman. Alas, their agents will not second any efforts the landlords may wish to make to this effect, for they will give trouble. The neighbouring residents will not favour them, for they will cause expense, and condemn their present practice.

With regard to legislative measures, the fate of Ireland as a prosperous portion of the British dominions may be truly said to depend greatly on the next session of Parliament. That session will seriously be "big with the fate of Cato and of Rome." It is very probable that the people will continue

to endure, until they find whether anything and what is likely to be done on the momentous subject of landlord and tenant; if the legislature should decline interference to any great extent, the defects in that important relation will most assuredly right themselves, it "may be" by a simultaneous effort of some kind, or, if not, by a continued restlessness, a feverish excitement, or sullen discontent in general, with partial disturbances in particular places, and, if possible, an increased indisposition to pay rents, &c. subversive of all civilization, of all law, all subordination, all instruction, all industry, all improvement, all prosperity. Seven years of such a state as we contemplate will throw the country a century back, nor will it recover until the remedy has been *at length* applied at a cost of double its present price, and perhaps too late for the prosperity of Ireland; for as one cause of discontent begets another, so will other discontents grow out of the continuance of this "monster" source of misery.

A very large estate in Leinster was apparently better managed than usual: the agent was humane, yet zealous for his employer: in his zeal he charged the tenantry for turbary, *in addition* to their rents, making many hundreds a-year difference; but the "string was drawn too tight;" the tenants rebelled with violence, and it will take a long time to resettle them.

There can be no doubt of the willingness, nay, the eagerness and anxiety, of the legislature to

apply remedial measures to any evils, the existence of which may be proved to its satisfaction; but "there's the rub." How can you prove to the satisfaction of the landed interest of Ireland, or of the members sent to Parliament by them, that the "monster" social evils of Ireland arise out of the facts developed in the foregoing pages?

I confess that on this account I look at the upshot despondingly for Ireland, although in her Pandora's box Hope still remains at bottom.

It will be said, or thought, by many senators who are tired of the little progress made in all the efforts for tranquillizing Ireland, what is the use of trying more, since nothing succeeds? *Conciliation* was tried without effect on the royal visit of George the Fourth, which even did harm. *Emancipation* was to cure every wound, but it has both opened the old sores, and created new ones. Give what you will, it never satisfies. *Repeal* itself, if it were possible, would only be a step to *separation*, and that would soon lead to actual *aggression*, and condign *punishment*. All this is most true: still we doubt not that justice will be dispensed to Ireland, merely for the sake of justice. "The Times" may be right in the paragraph quoted p. 100, that "to make good landlords by Act of Parliament is impossible;" but, when once a government becomes sensible of the root of social evils, the habit of legislation *suggests* remedial measures, and these may *tend* to promote and encourage good landlordism; so that in time this beautiful island may become as rich,

and the people as contented and happy, as the usual course of things in this "world of woe" admits.

Surely it is a great anomaly, that a government really and truly *anxious* to do good to Ireland, should enjoy so little of its confidence. It is, in fact, like the best of doctors, who often feels the patient's pulse, often visits, and often prescribes for him, but he still lingers, his pains increase, and his sufferings aggravate, he loses confidence, and either throws himself into the hands of the quack, or resorts to Morrison's pills, No. 1, which he takes by the handful, and fancies himself better. What then can be done? Is there no "master mind" equal to this case? or are the remedies known, but the courage to apply them wanting? Alas! whilst the rival doctors, Whig and Tory, are quarrelling over the cause and nature of the disease, the patient languishes, till, in a paroxysm of fever and despair, he jumps up in a fury, tries to kick them both down stairs, and is only secured by the strait waistcoat!

But surely some legislative measures might be devised which should promote the adoption of arrangements for the improvement of the country by allowances and assistances to tenants.

If it were possible to exempt the amount of these allowances from the assessment of poor-rate, or any other public impost, it would be something still better to enact that, *in all future lettings, at*

least 10 *per cent. of the rent should be returned in and by allowances to the tenants for improvements by draining, liming, or fencing.*

I cannot indeed conceive why a Building Act should not pass to regulate the mode of building in at least all *towns* in Ireland, providing for their *drainage*, and the stability and safety of their roofs and chimneys, amongst other particulars.

Nothing can possibly be more important in the towns of Ireland, than better sewerage. In the city of Cork, there is so bad a drainage that the consumption of fuel is much greater than it otherwise need be, in order to disperse the damp; and if it were not for the fortunate circumstance of much of the "back slums" being on declivities, this town would suffer dreadful mortality.

Some enactment might also be wholesomely made to regulate *squatters*. To make it competent, within a certain time, for the police to remove them to the Union as vagrants and trespassers unless they have obtained the immediate landlord's "lines" of consent, and to inflict a penalty on the immediate tenant, if he suffers them without notice to landlord or police.

And why also could not the state of cottars' cabins be subject to inspection under *sanatory regulations;* and if certified unhealthy, competent authorities should enforce the repair of them upon the tenant of the farm. This would tend to improve the tenants' houses by the force of example, and the operation of pride.

Again, I cannot perceive why estates under trust should not be enabled by law to allow the tenantry so much per cent. of their rents, say in *underdraining*, only as a permanent improvement, in cases wherein the rents are beyond the septennial valuation, and the holdings at will. It has, indeed, been already suggested, I think, in the second volume of the "Journal of the Royal Agricultural Society," that the possessors of mortgaged estates should be empowered to raise a sum on precedent security, for the purpose of draining on such estates. We greatly prefer its being done by the tenants out of rents; but this might be accommodated.

The Government paid twenty millions of money for the emancipation (so called) of the West Indian slaves. Why should they not *now lend*, say one million a-year for twenty years to landowners, on the security of their estates, for the purpose of such permanent improvement of lands and buildings in Ireland as might be approved by commissioners, one-third the cost thereof being otherwise provided for by the landlord, and one other third by the tenant?

The fund placed at the disposal of the Board of Works would be much more beneficially employed for these purposes, than for ostentatious displays of almost useless public works. It would, in fact, be only applying this fund more in detail than at present, but not towards less grand or important objects on the whole, and with the effect

of preserving a man's income to himself, but making him leave to his successor, not a debt alone, but a fourfold fund for its liquidation, by means of improvements made.

But I fear it may be asked, in that kind of tone which anticipates refusal,—

Will the Government make any sacrifice for Ireland? Will it allow the growth of tobacco, which might be easily and very successfully cultivated by the small farmers?—and it would be so long before it hurt the revenue, that it would never be felt.

Will it afford any protections and advantages in butter, and tallow, and flax, and hemp, against foreign competition?

Will it mitigate the tax on malt and beer, or remove them altogether, in Ireland, for the twofold purpose of encouraging the growth of barley and the consumption of beer? Or will it continue to give to strangers, by liberal tariffs in their favour, what it withholds from its own people?

Will it continue to hear its children ask "for bread" and give them a stone?

But revenue considerations may interfere! Why, can any loss of present revenue be set in competition with the relief of human misery? or can any present sacrifice of revenue be comparable to the increase of revenue which will arise from the relief of that misery over the face of a country two-thirds the size of England, and which, if made rich, might

assist the Imperial resources in an immensely greater ratio than at present?

The establishment of an agricultural school in every barony would be an excellent mode of introducing better systems of farming, and particularly the practice of draining, which has been promulgated from Templemoyle, County Derry, to a most beneficial extent. In the case of farming, example goes beyond precept, *when the example is successful.* But where are the funds to come from? Would to God that half the cost of Union-houses had been thus applied! Surely the expenditure for roads might be lessened, and these things provided for out of the grand jury cess.

If these agricultural schools were properly constituted, not too large, but of a size similar to the most usual or best sized farms for the country; if they were conducted so as to meet the views of the surrounding tenantry, and so as to convince them that the plans practised were the best they themselves could adopt; if fair statements of cost and results were given, and fair profit and loss accounts published; the benefits would be great, and the cost to the scholars should be little more than that of feeding them at home. One boy from each parish would be enough, and the farm should not exceed thirty acres, the establishment and cost to be paid by a barony rate levied by the grand jury, and the payments of the scholars. I am of opinion that the boys should read and write before they are admitted into those schools, and that

they should be taught farming only there during one year. Day scholars also might be admitted. Let not your zeal for agricultural schools carry you beyond their prudent magnitude and aim. Temper zeal with discretion; and recollect that examples to the neighbouring tenantry are the true and legitimate objects of such establishments, not qualifying for stewards, and bailiffs, and gardeners. That they are simply to afford an opportunity of instructing boys who are to succeed their fathers in the actual cultivation of a small plot of land, to the best advantage; not to instil the first principles of agriculture, or teach them to speculate on the theory of vegetation.

Even now it might be desirable to appropriate one wing of the Union-houses to this purpose for the present, and to enable the trustees of such schools to hire both cultivated and coarse mountain lands, as near as may be to the Union-house, and to employ the paupers from them thereon.

But in truth, "there is a lion in the way," which creates after all but too great a probability that the evil of too high rents, the evil of a general absence of any assistance to tenants, will *not* be cured by act of Parliament—*not* by the timely consideration of landlords—but in the present temper of the people they will cure it themselves. And how? Why, by what is called *passive resistance to rents*.

We all recollect the passive resistance to *tithes*; how the incumbents of some parishes were "*mur-*

dered;" how the law was put in force abortively, though with loss of life by means of the military, and that was called "*massacre;*" how some incumbents dared not ask for tithes, although they were called upon to dispense those expensive charities incident to their "sacred calling;" how many highly respectable families were reduced to send first their music and their books, then their furniture, into the next large town, to be sold, wherewith to buy potatoes for their food; how even these potatoes "would not" be sold to them by their own parishioners; how Government advanced a million of money to the clergy, much of which got into rich pockets, though intended for poor incumbents, and much remains *there;* and how *this* ended with the reduction of one-fourth the tithe, and the charge of the remainder upon the landlord.

We all remember the "*reign of terror*" of the Whiteboys, the Rockites, and factions of other denominations, aimed partly against rents as well as tithes. These bandings were not without cause, and I heard a benevolent nobleman, in the fulness of that justice and humanity which ever mantled in his heart, say, "Really the Whiteboys have a great case!" That nobleman had made *his* tenants happy, and whilst the surrounding district was in possession of the Rockites, they seized some wine on its road to him, but on reading the direction, it was forwarded with "Captain Rock's compliments, and any packages in that

nobleman's name should be safely delivered." Was not this a hint? Yes! Was it taken? No. What was the result? The law was vindicated, and the "insurrection" was put down by military force, and, by the mere accident of a humane yet firm officer in command, with little bloodshed. Similar events may again occur in certain localities, with similar endings, but let us reflect on the miseries they occasion; on the terror and suffering of families within their vortex; on what the miserable insurgents themselves endure; on the cost of men and money to quiet these localities, and on the rankling heartburnings that are left behind. But if local disturbances, without any visible or known organization, are so much to be dreaded, and so injurious in their effects, (at least for a season, for they *do* relax the oppressor's gripe,) what is to be apprehended from an organization of the whole of Munster, with extensive branches into Leinster and Connaught, and some degree of sympathy in Ulster;—an organization made and headed by the priests themselves, whose *salutary* influence over their flocks we have already described to be so great, but whose evil influence, in this case, is almost without bounds? It is, however, but christian charity to conclude that they think it otherwise than evil to interfere thus ardently on behalf of their flocks. It would be uncharitable in us, sitting by a comfortable English fireside, and quite unconscious of what the people of Ireland have to bear, and the priests to

witness; it would be unjust, without evidence, for us to conclude that the holy ministers of the christian religion, which in all its phases inculcates "peace on earth and good will towards men," should almost unanimously "say to evil, Be thou my good!" or cry against the laws, "War! War! No peace! Peace is to me a war." No! It is my firm belief that they consider it their bounden duty to promote such proceedings as *they think* (however erroneously) will have the effect of emancipating their flocks from burthens which they are unable to bear. But not the priests alone are banded with the people. Men of higher grade, of better education, and of greater enterprise, than any known to be connected with former outbreaks, are linked in a movement for what is called Repeal, but which is only another name for separation, and the "insane dream" of which will end in the attempt to redress certain social evils, amongst which the present state of the relation between landlord and tenant is predominant. It is true that far different things are avowed, and this denied, and that many of the partisans, if not the leading Agitator himself, are dupes as to the real object; but *this* cannot be safely promulgated, and is therefore kept concealed till "the fulness of time" arrive. *I am no alarmist;* but simply ask, What course will the landlords take, should a simultaneous resistance to the payment of rents take place? Should the people be secretly instructed to say, notwithstanding the public disavowal, "You

have denied us justice in this and that, (no matter what, in denying Repeal as well as anything else,) and we now deny you the justice of payment of any more rent than we (or some spurious court constituted for the purpose) shall deem fair." Or even not being so instructed, but exhorted against it, will the leaders or even the priests have power to stop them? Certainly not! What course, I say, will the landlords then take? Will they sell the stock and crops? Who will buy them? Will they send the cattle to England? How will the business be carried on for next year's rent? Will they prevent rescue by military force? How will this be accomplished throughout the length and breadth of the land? Will they "take the law," and proceed by ejectment? How will the expenses and the loss of rent be borne? And how can the eviction of the chief population of a whole country be effected? But it may be said, why anticipate evil before it arrives. Why "take up the load before we come to it?" We ask, in reply, as we asked before, can it be supposed that all this "*émeute*" is to end in nothing, "in a bottle of smoke?" I say it will not, but that after waking from the "insane dream" of Repeal, the organization will turn to other matters, more immediately coming home "to men's business and bosoms."

To the landlords of Ireland it may almost be said, "Awake, arise, or be for ever fallen!" It may be said to them as Ariel sang,—

" While you here do snoring lie,
Open-eyed conspiracy
His time doth take;
If of life you keep a care,
Shake off slumber, and beware.
Awake! awake!"

For if something is not done this next session in the matter of landlord and tenant, after all the expectation that has been raised, it will certainly be taken into the rude hands of the people, to try and get justice in their own way.

" And you all know, security
Is mortals' greatest enemy."

It is true that these intended simultaneous breaches of law seldom take place to any extent; that the best organizations for illegal purposes fall off, and that they are "ropes of sand," leading to ropes of hemp—

" That the rash fierce blaze of riot cannot last,
For violent fires soon burn out themselves;
Small showers last long, but sudden storms are short:
He tires betimes that spurs too fast betimes:
With eager feeding food doth choke the feeder:
Light vanity, insatiate cormorant,
Consuming means, soon preys upon itself."

It is true that the law will at all events ultimately triumph; that *any* difficulties that can occur, will yield to time and perseverance; but what losses will arise to both parties, even from partial disturbance of the course of business! What ruin to the country! What moral mischiefs

will take place! What sense of wrong perpetuated! Far better to subdue by moral force, and to redress voluntarily and generously, where "the shoe pinches!"

How can it be expected that English capital will flow into Ireland whilst the agrarial population are in such a state of distress, misery, and discontent? So far from it, loans already contracted for have been withheld, others have been diverted to far distant, but more tranquil countries, contracts are withdrawn, tradesmen draw in their dealings, and the island is left to its own resources. The transactions of transfer of property by deed have been so few, that some of the register-offices have scarcely business enough to keep them open, and a falling off has occurred in the registry in London of above 2000 deeds below the usual number in a given time, showing that the business of the country is paralysed.

And really, it may truly be said, that "the tenantry of Ireland have a great case." Let us state it as contrasted with the tenantry of England, under the same Government, and very similar laws. We have already shown great differences, but we will here recapitulate them in another form.

In England, the landlord exacts about one-third the *saleable* produce as rent. In tillage lands, seldom more than one-fourth.

In the south of Ireland, the landlord exacts often the whole value of saleable produce, seldom less than two-thirds, even of tillage land.

In England, the landlord either entirely furnishes or contributes greatly to the buildings on the farm.

In Ireland, the tenant has to erect and keep all the buildings.

In England, the buildings are ample, and afford every convenience.

In Ireland, they are poor and scanty.

In England, the markets are near, and the cost of conveyance thereto seldom exceeds 5 per cent. on value.

In Ireland, the cost of preparing for and marketing, is 10 to 15 or 20 per cent. on the value of the produce, and often more.

In England, the climate is so genial, that a day's work is seldom lost.

In Ireland, it is so inclement, that little work can be done abroad for three months, and many days are lost in summer.

In England, labour is effectual, and men skilful.

In Ireland, three men are required for one in England.

In England, the farmer finds the fences in good order, and the ground in good heart, often well underdrained, and in a regular course of cropping, and a supply of hay, straw, and manure to go on with.

In Ireland, everything is wrecked and ruined, and all to be restored, sometimes to be created from the mountain side.

We have already shown that these circumstances of difference make about 100 per cent. against the Irish farmer in rent. Is not this difference far

too great? Let any reasonable man answer the question. What is the remedy? Do you ask us to give up our incomes? No; but to sacrifice a small portion (not like Sir Boyle Roche, "the last shilling") to save the remainder; nay, to increase it. "Cast your bread upon the waters, and after many days it shall return" fourfold. But, say you, we look to the *present*, not to the *future*. It is the *present* impending mischief against which I warn you. It is the *present* pressing necessity to do something on which I exhort you. Like the prophet, "I cry aloud, and spare not;" be you not "like the deaf adder;" nor say, "this fellow would give all away," for I would *give*, only to *receive* a "quid pro quo," and no more than good *policy* justifies, though humanity demands. Let me, therefore, have cause to say,

> "———— I find thee apt;
> And duller shouldst thou be than the fat weed
> That rots itself in ease on Lethe wharf,
> Wouldst thou not stir in this!"

I exhort you, therefore, to consider the importance to your tenant—

1. Of a decent house to live in, because his character takes a considerable bias from his habitation. I have known a mountain tenant refuse to permit even the priest to bring his horse into the kitchen of his new house. "No!" said he, "your reverence, the house is for my family and you; the stable for my horse and yours!" I have seen efforts made upon the land, after building a new house, which never had and never would have taken place

without it. As the wretched hut debases a man's character, so the decent house lifts a man in the world: his sons and daughters marry better; he gets a better class of servants, who serve him better, and prefer his house. The business of the house is better done, and with greater economy both of expense and consumption, and the man's position is altered for the better. If he has built the house on his own plan, and partly with his own materials and money, he becomes attached to it, is proud of it, and strives his utmost to keep it. Give him, therefore, what help you can towards a decent house, with sleeping places in plenty. I have known the centre chimney fictitious, to show outside, a three chimneyed cottage being thought a respectable "mansion." Why should not this "proper pride" be cherished? I have found an allowance in money often answer, and it never need exceed half a year's to a year's rent, in three or four yearly instalments; but the best plan for the better sort of houses, is to give doors, windows, and roof, and themselves the wall, floor, and slate; or give the slate, if possible, to ensure stability. Everything, however, must depend on circumstances.

But a great error, not unusual in building farm-houses in Ireland, especially by the English, is the making them too expensive. I have heard them quote in justification, the maxim, "What you do at all, do well;" but when a house for a tenant of 20*l.* a-year costs 400*l.* it is not done well, it is overdone: rather, let us quote—

"To *build*, to plant, whatever you intend,
To rear the column, or the arch to bend,
To raise the terrace, or to sink the grot,
In all let *nature* never be forgot:"

i.e. the nature of the subject. Employ good sense and common sense in all cases. And if a very small farmer likes to live amongst the smoke, for the warmth of it, that object may still be gained, by a rain-proof roof and a dry floor, which a little attention on the part of his landlord or agent would soon enable him to obtain.

2. Consider the value of a byre, or shelter to his cattle, in inclement weather. How can *they* endure the storm? They require much more food without shelter, and yet scarcely live. Even in England, I offered some materials which happened to be on the spot to a tenant of 600*l.* a-year, to build a shed, to block out the north-east wind, which raked his cattle-yard "fore and aft," and at first he declined the expense; but changing his mind, he afterwards repeatedly told me, that "he would not be without it for as much *per annum* as it cost him to build!" *Shelter* and *warmth must* be had in Ireland. A cow or horse is often lost for want of it: but how *can* your tenant build it, under such a rent? You say necessity and shift compel him, and so they do, but this makes him strive to delay your rent, and pay it with so much reluctance. It moreover keeps him poor and needy, and a fall of times breaks him down, breaks his heart, and makes him ready to "break out." Give him

therefore roof and slate, as soon as he has built the walls.

3. Consider the loss sustained by the Irish farmer, for want of a barn or threshing place; that he thrashes on the road, when dry, the wind blowing away all the chaff, though good food for horses; that, in consequence, his wheat is so deteriorated, that he has to sell at a low price, since it must be kiln dried, before grinding; that in quantity also he has to deliver 70lbs. per bushel, when the English bushel is 63 to 65lbs. His oats are reckoned deteriorated by 5lbs. to 7lbs. in the bushel, and he must deliver 45lbs. in Liverpool instead of 38 to 40lbs. the bushel, as in England, besides loss of value by damp, &c. If he gets no assistance towards a barn, he must be less able to pay your rent. Some poles from your plantations, and a little slate, would cost you next to nothing.

4. Stable—pig-houses—and other minor conveniences, he *must* have. You give him nothing towards them, and he finds it difficult to pay the rent. Necessity alone has made him *promise*. Your agent finds it hard to extract from him what *he* cannot get.—Arrear ensues, and you call him a bad tenant. Alas! sir, "Is it not you who are a bad landlord?"

5. Your tenant knows well enough that his land is wet; that it would be much more productive if drier—he has heard of draining, but how is he to go about it, even if he had the means?—but your agent has screwed out of him the last penny he

could raise. How then *can* he drain? Besides, without a lease, his rent may be raised, if he creates an increase of crop. Your agent really must point out to him the way to drain, and you must allow him sixpence out of every ninepence he expends, or earns by the sweat of his own brow, in draining your lands.

The art of underdraining, known and practised in England for two hundred years, is no mystery, nor does its practice require the slightest conjuration. The meanest know that water runs downhill; but even clever persons sometimes cause it to run too fast, by too steep drains, and thus to choke and over ride. The depth of drains can hardly be too great, but their filling towards the surface with open or porous materials must be in proportion to the tenacity of the soil. The thickest volume or longest lecture would or could contain no more.

6. Lime is generally a most efficient manure in Ireland, and often more essential in parts from which it is distant, than in those to which it is contiguous. The tenant should therefore be allowed a certain quantity yearly, at from half to three-fourths its value on the spot; but, as things are, the agent does not leave him the ready money to buy it, and he cannot farm without it. Sometimes, however, marl and limestone gravel are equally efficacious as lime. Some landlords seeing the necessity of allowing lime, have restricted it to the use of *drained* ground, and this in a country where draining has just been heard of, scarcely practised. This

is offering assistance under conditions which can hardly be complied with, and therefore worse than none; yet draining ought to precede liming, as ought cleaning to precede cropping the ground; but *in Ireland we must establish the habit of doing something, and then amend the habit gradually.* Others insist on the tenant "laying out" as much more lime at his own expense, as the landlord gives; but this is often a sort of prohibition to laying out any lime.

7. Fencing is absolutely requisite; but how is your tenant to afford more than his present miserable mud banks, usually breached in all directions, but made up *pro tem.* when called imperatively into actual use? You should assist him to the extent of half value in making stone faced "ditches" (banks), planted with quick, and sown at top with furze for shelter.

In all these several matters of draining, liming, and fencing, 10 per cent. on the rent might cover them to a good and useful extent. *Time* must also be taken to effect these, as well as building; but they must be long persevered in, not taken up eagerly, and suddenly dropped.

8. Roads are indispensable. You cannot *now* get private occupation roads "off the county," and must make them at your own expense, since your tenants are not able, in point of means or intelligence, to perform this *one thing needful;* neither are they ever likely individually to make roads for common use, or to join together for that purpose.

But if you are not prepared to *make* roads where wanted, you might at least *mark out* the proper *lines* for them, lock spit the bounds, and level "a track" for future completion.

Counsellor Bryan, 1831, after detailing many of the customs respecting landed property on the continent, says, "In every country in Europe, excepting Ireland, the landlord finds something for the tenant besides the mere soil."

Again, methinks, I hear you, the landlord, exclaim:—"What! am I to give up one-fourth or more of my income to assist my tenants?" Yes, if your tenant is in need of these things to enable him to pay your rent. In many parts of Ireland, the tenantry are not so needy as to require these "helps;" but where they are so, it is not only the bounden duty, but most indubitably the interest of the landlord to afford them, and this without in the slightest degree adverting to the distresses of the times from low prices of produce, or to the probability of any unusual difficulties in the realisation of rents. But in connexion with those circumstances, we are clearly of opinion, that it will be found the best policy for landlords to remit 10 to 20 per cent. of their rents, in allowance for improvement under proper regulations.

Commissioner Binns, speaking of "Crome Castle," between Enniskillen and Cavan, the seat of —— Creighton, Esq., previously mentioned as one of the best landlords in Ireland, says—"He not only teaches his tenants to improve their farms,

but assists them in doing it, and refuses to take more rent than he is persuaded the land is worth, although offered to him. If this system were generally adopted by Irish landlords, the country would soon be in a flourishing condition."

I am fully aware of that other mode of encouraging the reclamation of coarse land which landowners (whether as lords of the soil or lessees) have already adopted, over all Ireland, and that with considerable effect, since we see cultivation creeping around the foot and up the slopes of every mountain, and spreading over every bog. We see rugged spots, whose cultivation "would break the heart of any Scot," "brought in," *i.e.* tilled for potatoes; and moreover we see this to the greatest, or at least to the most conspicuous extent, on estates well known to be ruled with a rod of iron, and where rents are highest and most rigidly exacted. Ireland is indeed a country of anomalies not easily explicable. "Look," will the agent say, "at those fields which seven years ago were wild boggy mountain, now velvet green with the potato, or waving with the yellow corn; talk of the improvement of Ireland, is it not realized there? Hundreds of human beings are provided with food by the labour of themselves and families, whilst scores of acres are added to my lord's estate, without any cost to him, though they help to pay his rent." Irish politeness will prevent his adding, except in *thought*, "The English don't understand us, and had better let us alone! We know how to

make the most of our property, and at the same time improve it without their aid." Thus he "runs on" exultingly. But what is the fact? Why, that these fields are miserable patches of roods or half roods, which squatters, the most wretched of human beings, have bargained for with the tenant at exorbitant rates, which, if possible, they mean to evade paying or discharging in any way; that they have probably chosen these wild spots, not only under the urgent necessity for subsistence, but probably for the convenience of stealing a sheep or kid occasionally, or of attending a private still hard by, or other equally desperate speculation;—that after a few years they become a perfect scourge and nuisance to the place, and now are chargeable under the poor-law! The agent then remonstrates with the immediate tenant, and orders their removal. He very naturally replies, that with his "high rent and heavy charge," (by the word *charge* meaning his family,) he must take every possible means of making rent, adding, "Sure your honour can't object to the *improvement*." But as to removing them, he says, "I b'lieve my lord himself couldn't do that, at any rate 'twou'd 'set' (surpass) the likes o' me." In the end, the land is found to be loaded with numerous wretched human beings, who eat up all they can, or care to produce, and my lord is placed in the horns of a dilemma; he must either *abandon* his land to *such a colony*, or he must commit one of those "*atrocities*" called a "clearance." If he decides upon the latter, he finds another

dilemma tossing his mind and torturing his feelings, viz. whether to be guilty of an act of inhumanity in driving these poor creatures forth into the wide world by due course of law, *or* to buy them out, send some to America, planting some in other situations, and allowing these poor people to place themselves *under* his *protection* in all time to come, "to oblige his lordship;" thus refunding all the additional rent he ever got by them, and paying double for all "the improvements" they ever made.

How much more feasible is our plan of assisting and directing tenants to increase their produce during a fixed period, and so securing punctual payment of present rents, and advance of rent at the termination of that period; by the very operation of which plan, these poor people, now wretched squatters, would become, as cottar labourers, in full employ.

Still there is another mode of reclaiming coarse lands which I advocate and practise, viz. parcelling out lots for immediate eligible tenants, and assisting them in building, fencing, draining, and liming.

I am also quite aware of the efforts made in several parts of Ulster, to introduce the Belgian and the English modes of culture, with alternate green and grain crops, and stall-feeding; of the employment by Mr. Blacker of agricultural agents, and even by Lord Farnham of moral agents, at 300*l.* a-year, with house and grounds. But still I confess that, beyond a small model farm, or an

agricultural school, or a tenant here and there practising the new modes, I much prefer assisting the tenants in building, liming (or marling), fencing, and underdraining; and for the application of these, such general directions as an active agent may promulgate, would be amply sufficient; small tenants will, nay *must*, try what they are required; but whilst their miserable turnips are crowded and choked by their own multitude, besides weeds, and not worth 20*s.* per acre, they will be lamenting the loss of a crop of potatoes worth 10*l.* per acre. And as to premiums, "I wish (said a cottar housewife, the day after gaining the prize for neatness) "yer honer had let me know yer cooming, and I'd ha' cleaned up." The adoption of improved habits must come voluntarily, or, if forced, they will expire when the forcing ceases, and a Mr. Blacker will be seldom found to keep them alive.

But some will contend that a farm of four acres might be so managed as to maintain a family and yet pay a heavy rent; and so it would, if *well* managed, *i. e.* well fenced and drained, and then cropped in the course of

1 acre potatoes, well manured and limed, planted with cabbages or rape, as dug.
1 acre wheat or oats.
1 acre ley, mown twice, and part soiled, or house fed.
1 acre ley, fed.

But where is the peasant to be found who will or can continue to manage it thus? During the first few years he manages to raise about 10*l.* a-year in ready money after paying the taxes. The whole of this 10*l.* goes in rent. He must have clothes, &c., for which he drives the land by taking two or three more successive corn crops, and perhaps omits the ley altogether, and consequently, in about six or eight years, according to the powers of the soil, he finds himself with a cabin full of children, and his land worn out; which in Sligo and other counties happens to such an extent, that the oats, which are the only grain attempted, "come blind," or grow up to straw without corn. How then can he pay the rent, or become otherwise than a ragged pauper, deeply in arrear and reckless of his fate? To continue such a system is cruelty in the extreme;—to exchange it for a better will be—what?—troublesome!

But it will be said by those who wish for a continuance of "things as they are," Surely Mr. Blacker has proved that small farms may thrive. So he has, with infinite labour, care, and painstaking, which cannot be too much admired, and by means of an agricultural agent; but neither the people, the soil, nor the climate, admit the remotest hope of the system becoming general or continuing long after his attention to it shall cease, although the good effects whilst it does continue are very great, especially in a country already cut up into very small farms, which must be made the

best of. But, speaking generally, the case to which we have alluded of a four-acre farm, too truly represents the almost universal state of the tillage-land occupiers of Ireland, whether of four or forty acres, or even more; *i. e.* they have got their land into a foul and exhausted state by over-cropping, in order to pay the rent exacted; and now that the price of their produce has declined, they find themselves with their burthens increased, and their resources worn out; hence their restlessness, agitation, recklessness, and even savage conduct; evils *only*, and we say it advisedly, *only* to be cured by the means we herein seek to persuade the adoption of, to enforce by argument, and to recommend by example, viz. leases with allowances for improvements of the land tending to the increase of its produce. And what is the alternative? Nothing less than the almost annihilation of all rents, for worn-out land can pay *no* rent, and the struggle between the landlord to get his rent, which is *his* life, and the tenant who has it not, will and must be most fearful, and must end badly for both. Avert, therefore, this dreadful alternative; be wise in time; adopt what is recommended on the faith of experience, and on the ground of common sense.

It is worthy of consideration, what would be the natural *moral* effect on the mind and character of a small farmer in Ireland, whose landlord or agent encourages, directs, or assists him in such improvements as will have the effect of increasing his pro-

duce. Suppose him first without these advantages, but circumstanced like the general tenantry of the country. His cabin small, with clay floor, on which the rain that penetrates the roof stands in pools; the place full of children and pigs; the bed-clothes very scanty; the body-clothes partly in pawn; the land exhausted, and poisoned with weeds; the crops wretched; the cow half-starved; the fences down; the rent a year or more in arrear; and his family subsisting on dry potatoes. What are the feelings of a man so situated? If he is a mild character, or is "beat" by his circumstances, they are those of despair; if a strong character, those of recklessness; if a violent character, those of ferocity—and it *may* be said to him by designing persons—

> "Art thou so bare and full of wretchedness,
> And fear'st to die?—famine is in thy cheeks,
> Need and oppression stareth in thine eyes,
> Upon thy back hangs ragged misery;
> The world is not thy friend, nor the world's law;
> The world affords no law to make thee rich:
> Then be not poor, but break it."

But let us suppose a Mr. Blacker coming to him, putting him in a way to increase the produce of his land threefold, by draining, fencing, and manuring it; assisting him in doing these by defraying part of the expense out of the rent; contributing towards the building of a decent cabin and outhouses; waiting for payment of the arrear till the increased produce arises from these improvements, aided, as it will be, by the increase of the poor man's com-

forts, and consequent increase of his exertions. What are *now* his feelings? Are they not those of joy, of exultation, and of independence? Has he not a feeling of self-respect—a feeling of gratitude towards his friendly adviser, his patient creditor, and his successful guide, as well as gratitude to his Maker for sending him such a friend? Does he not now look forward to some decent provision for his family? His daughters are become good matches for the sons of respectable families of the same grade. His sons are accounted worthy to make similar alliances. And far from joining any kind of brawls, his mind and soul will be on his land: "where his treasure is, there will his heart be also;" and, however poor, he will live and die a good husband, a good father, a good citizen, and a good Christian, for

> "Honour and fame from no condition rise;
> Act well your part, there all the honour lies."

Now, if these are the moral effects in any one case of the system we propose, why should they not be similar in every case? and if so, what a change would Ireland undergo! and who can

> "Look on this picture, and on this,"

without devoutly wishing that it were so!

But can it be expected that such a change as this should take place at once? By no means. Time and perseverance are requisite elements in such beneficial consequences; and we repeat, that it is better not to begin, than not to persevere;

and before beginning, let every one reflect, that no good thing in this life is without alloy, that there are drawbacks to every enjoyment, and failures in the best exertions to do our duty. But, under all, let us reflect on the words of the Psalmist—"A good man sheweth favour and lendeth: he will guide his affairs with discretion. He shall not be afraid of evil tidings: he hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor; his horn shall be exalted with honour."

And let not the English landlord or agriculturist be jealous of the agrarial prosperity of Ireland, since it cannot fail to be conducive to the prosperity of the empire; for if, by the improvement of agriculture in both countries, wheat enough could be grown for England to dispense with the foreign supply, what vast and important consequences might ensue! In the present case, suppose one million of quarters to be annually imported, costing at Dantzic, &c. two millions of money, not more than five hundred thousand pounds of this would be sent back in merchandise, and that in colonial produce chiefly; for they will not long continue to take our manufactures, however cheaply furnished, their true and obvious policy being to produce them at home.

Suppose, therefore, that one million and a half of bullion goes out of the country to pay for this imported corn, it lowers the prices of corn here; thus, if one sovereign out of every three be sent abroad, the remaining two must do the duty of the

three. So that if wheat was 60*s.* per quarter when there were three sovereigns in circulation, it would tend towards 50*s.* when reduced to two. On the other hand, an addition of a sovereign to the three already in circulation, making four, would tend to raise the price to 70*s.* I say a *tendency* to do so, because the effect would be controlled, of course, by many other elements. Therefore, it is highly interesting to the English and Irish agriculturist to supply the consumption of the country without foreign aid; and as Ireland *has* in one year supplied 800,000 quarters of wheat to England, she might, by a small *general* advance in agriculture, be made to supply that quantity constantly; and, together with the advance in England, the full supply might be afforded at a price so low, as to exclude the foreign corn, and the drain of our bullion. When once the period arrives, in which we can produce corn and meat enough for our own consumption, so as to shut out the foreigner, we shall soon thereafter become, as we have been before, an exporting nation, *i.e.* that the balance of imports and exports of corn, &c. will be on our side; for the wheat-growing countries are not wheat-consuming countries, and they will slacken growing it when our market fails; so that we shall have the supply of those parts of Europe where wheat *is consumed* but not much grown. Then will again commence the prosperity of the British farmer (meaning the English, Irish, Scotch, and Welsh). Then will the culture of the earth be

rewarded with moderation indeed, but with certainty, and the pleasant, healthful, respectable, and independent calling of the agriculturist afford a competence unenvied and unassailed by other classes.

Thus we have recommended a sure mode of rendering Ireland prosperous in herself, and a useful and profitable auxiliary to England; a mode by no means doubtful, by no means visionary, but practical, sure, and certain in its effects,—one that we ourselves have practised for more than thirty years, with the utmost success, one that has, on a large scale, and during a considerable period of time, worked extremely well,—by improving greatly the character of the people, as well as their circumstances; by improving their respective farms, so as actually to double their rental value, under similar prices of produce to those in which this mode was instituted and carried on; and by yielding, during a lease of twenty-one years, a greater amount of ready money than could otherwise have been obtained. This mode of improving Ireland may be briefly defined to be,—*Letting lands at a full but fair rent, on a* LEASE *for (not exceeding) twenty-one years, under covenants and arrangements for improvements to be done by the tenant under the direction of the landlord, but the expense thereof to be partly defrayed by the landlord, by allowances out of the rent.*

Nor is this mode of improvement solely applicable to Ireland. There is no part of England,

Europe, or of the world, where it might not be practised with very great advantage to the possessors and the occupiers of landed property, under whatever denominations, or however circumstanced, since this mode of dealing with the tillers of the soil proceeds upon the principle, that *men willingly and strenuously labour, if the reward of that labour be secured to them*, and that human nature is everywhere the same.

The following letter was written to a nobleman who had ardently commenced the improvement of an extensive, wild, and very backward mountain estate in the north-west of Ireland. The writer had not at the time of writing seen the estate, but afterwards, upon an inspection of it, he did not wish to alter one word of his letter, which he thinks is a fit appendix to this chapter:

October, 1838.

"My Lord,—I deem myself under a promise to submit to your Lordship some considerations as to the management of your —— mountain property, in some slight return for the kind hospitality I had the honour of enjoying so much at ——; and yet I feel a great sense of presumption in the attempt to advise your Lordship at all, and still the greater, as not having seen the property, though long conversant with such. I am, however, encouraged by the conviction that your Lordship is too experienced to be misled by any of my opinions, and too good not to excuse what you may not

approve, as well as those points which, being obvious to you, might have been omitted by me.

"The first step to improvement is the breaking up of the partnership tenantry, and giving each individual his own portion of land; but I have not always found it practicable to carry this literally into effect. Some partnerships of two, or even more, were admitted in practice, on account of the inability to stock alone, of relationship, habit, attachment to locality, and other points. No system of improvement should be overstrained, and the worst existing customs have their degrees of necessity, and even of merit, and must be cautiously attacked, and gradually undermined. Occupations in wild mountain districts are often too large. In the more cultivated parts of Ulster, they are small; the medium, or true quantity, must be regulated by local habits, by the means or capital of tenants, by the objects in view, whether of getting land reclaimed, or making the most of it in its present state by stock, &c.; and also by ulterior views, as reclaiming, first by small holders, and gradually by doubling up farms, as circumstances favour the operation. This latter I take to have been the effect which time has worked in England, where the former farm-houses are now the labourer's cottages, successful small farmers having become large farmers, and unsuccessful ones labourers. The prospect of the operation of poor-laws must also now have its weight. The necessary provision for the present population will be a great feature in

the consideration of extent of occupation, and care should be taken to exclude from letting all planting-ground, all lines of future roads, and to reserve in hand all ground not actually wanted to provide for the occupation of the present population, the grazing of such reserved ground to be *sold* yearly, till located by new tenants. It is a great evil for tenants to have more land than they can manage well. Yet all must not be reduced to that point; and in general the great difficulty is, to determine how much evil should be tolerated, and how much combated. Besides, the peasantry have local attachments, and circumstances of relationship, which it would be cruel altogether to disturb. On one occasion, in Kerry, I altered the occupations of about 200 tenants, in White Boy times, in this way:—A survey having been made, (for which the Ordnance Map may now answer,) a list was made out of all tenants, and their under-tenants, and labourers, with columns for their character, circumstances, and eligibility for farms, &c., a committee of the principal tenants was convened, which sat for five days, and at which was determined who should stay or go, and where each family would be best located, according to the extent of their capability, local and other attachments, &c. The changes were then made in one day, quietly and without police, and not one ejectment took place over 15,000 acres. This plan might not, however, be applicable in other places; still, generally, it would be well to ascertain the capability of each

tenant, and to give him as much sound land as he could occupy and improve, besides mountain in common, beyond a certain heading line, up to which he may and should be required to reclaim; and also besides turbary and bog-pasturages, of all which each farm must have due proportion. In all these arrangements, vicinity to roads (or the lines of future roads) and to water are great, though obvious points. In wet, inclement, and stormy climates, and remote situations, cattle, either for dairy or for sale as young stock, should be the primary object; tillage the secondary, and that chiefly as subservient to the bringing of more land into permanent pasturage for cattle. With this view, the farms will be much larger than if corn (oats) were the chief object. After all, in apportioning an estate, the right must often give way to the expedient under the peculiar circumstances; but in yielding to those circumstances, it should always be kept in mind, what may be desirable as the ultimate destination of the lands in question, so far as can be foreseen. For instance, it may be desirable to have only one farm on a certain spot, but expedient to have one, two, or three. Still, all arrangements may be made for the ultimate one, until the consolidation can be judiciously effected, and houses encouraged, roads, and plantations, and fences made accordingly. The expense of agency in survey, or in making these arrangements, is a drawback, but in wild mountain regions, where acreage is less reckoned on than

soumage and feedage, the eye of a practised person, with the Ordnance Survey, &c., may suffice as a beginning of things.

"In cases where multitudes of miserable squatters have been introduced by middlemen, I have made cottar tenants of them, (but without allowances,) by allotting a bit of sound land, (if possible, already cultivated,) a tract of improveable mountain, a commonage on the mountain, and a place for turbary to each, or to two and even three in partnership, charging them its present full value as rent, and employing them to work out part of the rent, either in fencing their own farms, or on roads, &c. this employment becoming gradually less, as they become able to pay in money. There is a threefold benefit in this: (1.) They reclaim land not reclaimable by means of capital. (2.) They assume a greater rent than could be afforded by any other occupants. (3.) There is a benefit arising from their labour on roads, planting, and the like. To these may now be added, with reference to a poor-law, the prevention of pauperism.

"2. The question of leases is a difficult one, but in wild regions, and very small holdings, it may be better to have no leases or documentary holding under the present law, but an understanding of non-disturbance as to rent for twenty-one years (or any other term), on condition of good conduct, and under certain regulations to be well defined, and well known and understood, thus:—

"3. I have found highly beneficial a well-digested system of allowances out of rent towards defined

improvements which are to be made by the tenant, particularly as to houses, lime, &c., drains, and fences. Such allowances not to exceed a certain proportion of the rent annually,—say, in backward countries, fifteen or twenty per cent. This will not be an entire drawback on the rent, as the tenants can and will afford a higher rent (after a time) with those allowances, than they can without them; and I have, in fact, found that the operation of these allowances has rendered high rents low, and their good effect at that period is to make tenants able, willing, and even anxious to pay their rents, which will be allowed to be a great improvement of itself, besides the permanent improvement to the farms, which these allowances have been the means of working out. The cessation of the allowances is also virtually an advance of rent. These allowances must, however, to be effectual, be systematic and fixed, not dependent on chance, or the caprice of any agent, but be guaranteed on the honour of the proprietor to be permanent. An objection, (and the only one I know of) is the trouble to agents, and the consequent chance of deception, by allowances without the improvements, an objection analogous to not sowing corn lest the crop should fail, or the harvest prove unpropitious.

"4. HOUSES should be adapted to the habits and wants of the people. Mountaineers prefer a snug, small, thatched cabin, to a tall, handsome, slated house; and they are right, for it is less exposed to the storm, warmer of itself, and consumes less turf,

which is to them a dear fuel, in case the labour it employs *can be* otherwise employed on the improvements which entitle them to the allowances beforementioned. Besides, poor tenants on a wild farm neither want a better house than their neighbours of the same class, nor can they furnish and keep it accordingly. The objection to small, thatched cabins in wild regions, with the dunghill at the door, for farms of 10*l.* a-year and under, I have long learned to regard as an English prejudice, which, like many such as to Ireland and the Irish, are remote from wisdom. Such farmers can afford no other, and they are (I think wisely) content with them, and do in fact, from a taste founded on necessity, soon reduce better habitations to that condition. An objection to thatch is the consumpt of straw, which would otherwise become manure; but I think this met by the necessity it imposes to increase tillage, in order to grow straw; and in maritime situations, such as your Lordship's —— property, sandy dunes generally afford sand-rush for thatching, which I find, by long experience, may as well be cut as not, and its value may be given as part of the allowance for houses. On the other hand, slate is, in my mind, objectionable in wild regions, (in others the question is altogether different,) as requiring roof timber of a more costly kind, such as a tenant cannot often obtain; as less comfortable and acceptable, after all, to small tenants, and as consuming those funds of a landlord (for he must give the slate and timber for

it) that ought to be employed in other matters, as roads, planting, and the like. Slate should, however, be preferred as soon as circumstances are fitting. The house ought, I think, to be built entirely by the tenant, who can get bog-wood, and have the work done, by ways and means and dealings of his own, far cheaper than any landlord. He should be allowed not exceeding one year's rent towards it, by, say, three yearly instalments, as he may proceed with it. He will be sure to build it somewhat better than his former hut, and the steward or agent should, in fact, see that it has stone walls, a chimney, windows, and sufficient room to separate the family. I have found (after building several hundred houses) the best plan to be, a kitchen in the centre, with a double chimney, serving also for the parlour, which has two bed places; then on the other side the kitchen a bed-place and a pantry or dairy lofted for two low bed-places in the roof. But locality, &c. will best guide these details. When the house is built, it is of still more importance to encourage the building of outhouses, to serve for barn, stable, byre, &c. Those planned in the printed account of Lord Headley's improvements seem to me perfect for mountain-tenants, and the cheapest possible. They should be allowed for at per couple (of rafters) rather below value, the tenant will get the roof of bog-timber, and build the walls at little actual cost. I have found them answer when set a little back from the house, which they shelter, and then the

manure will often be more conveniently accumulated at the back kitchen-door.

"I am convinced that the moral effects of encouraging tenants to *provide themselves* with *suitable* habitations is very great, and often becomes the first mover of a desire to improve their condition, leading to the improvement of their lands and character; but too good a house may lead to their ruin, especially when built by the landlord, as they consider him a party to the expense it incurs.

"5. LIME, &c. Encouragement to lay out lime, or other convenient manure, by the tenants is of paramount importance, since on this must chiefly depend that increase of produce and value which is the aim of all improvement. Lime is so effectual and permanent a manure, that I would allow in your case the full first cost of it at the nearest place to obtain it; and this should be so managed that the tenants may get the limestone and burn it at home, saving ready money, and employing their people and families in cutting and saving the turf, breaking the stone, &c. and they can diet and manage the burners at little cost. The due allowances for this may easily be ascertained by persons measuring the lime, by solemn declarations taken and signed before magistrates and clergy, by the lime-burner's and quarryman's certificates, and by various means which local resources will supply. At first some little fraud may be practised, but after a time habit and benefit will most likely induce the tenants to exceed the quantity allowed for,

which should be regulated by the quantity the tenant is able or likely to lay out, the cost, rent, and other considerations.

"The free use of shelly sea sand, sea weed, or other manures locally available, may be encouraged by an allowance for mountain land newly broke up for reclaiming, and supplied with the usual quantity of sand. The period of allowance should be the second crop of potatoes, as then the ground is all broke; and one of the conditions of allowance should be, that the mountain earthy *soil* should be mixed with the bog to at least six inches deep of bottom soil over all the ground, since mere deep bog improvements by tenants, having a constant tendency to relapse, are not worth encouragement under a system having so many other objects. Several classes of premiums should be instituted for this kind of improvement to meet the highest and the lowest grade of execution. It might be some trouble to local agents to ascertain these, but time and habit would render it interesting, easy, and pleasant. It could also be made a public matter, like farming societies, and be connected with encouragements for the improvement of farming, by selling out clover, and rye grass, seed vetches, &c., giving credit for payment till the crop is obtained. The introduction of the naked oat, known as "Pillez" in the west of Cornwall, and "Pill Corn" in the extreme south of Ireland, might be advantageous, as it flourishes where no other grain would grow, and is very good food for children.

"6. DRAINING is so essential a process, that without it all else is lost. This can only be effectually secured by the proper lines of drainage being set out and lockspitted on behalf of the landlord, and the tenant being allowed for cutting them something so near the value of the work as to form an inducement for his doing so. Besides which there is the inducement arising from the benefit of the drains and the necessity for his paying the money as rent, if he does not entitle himself to the allowance. The deviation from habit, the doubts of benefits, and the actual loss between the banishment of aquatic, and the coming of better grasses, will require a strong inducement to cut drains, and the allowances must be aided by personal influence and even coercion. The drains should be classed as described in the account of Lord Headley's improvements, viz. heading, main, and wing drains. But in cases where a large common drain is requisite to serve for an outlet for several farms, or such as a small tenant could not master, the drain should be cut by the landlord. And it often happens, that on the side of a mountain the heading line, up to which reclamation may be carried, may be so run as to form not only a fence, but a catch-water drain, to the relief of several farms from the mountain waters.

"7. FENCING is a most material matter, especially bounds or mearing ditches between farms, as the mixture and trespass of stock creates mutual heart-burnings, which are mischievous.

They should be extra wide double ditches, faced with stone on both sides, at least half way up. A row of furze-seed should be sown at each edge of the top, and—if thought desirable—any forest trees best adapted to the soil and climate may be planted in the centre. These should be allowed for at a rate very near to their cost, half to each party, the furze-seed being found by landlord, who must also plant the trees. I do not deem the allowance for inside fences so necessary, unless other objects admitted the expense. The finding of gates for tenants implies a degree of progress not supposed to belong to our present subject, and may be deferred till poles can be afforded by plantations.

"8. ROADS are almost as essential as drains. These (exclusive of public roads) are entirely the business of a landlord, who must take on himself the finding of proper lines, marking them on the map, and lockspitting them on the ground. He must then employ proper persons to form and make the road with proper gullets and water tables. In general, good lines of road can be found on ground requiring little else than forming, and hard materials being near 50*l.* to 60*l.* per mile, ought to suffice. (See Lord Headley's Improvements.) It would greatly help a poor tenantry, to allow them to work toward rents on these roads, which should give a tolerably easy access to each farm. But such roads need not be gravelled wide, as public roads. Twelve feet in the centre is enough, and in remote places, at present without wheels, a horse track might do for

some time. It was on these that most of the inland trade and communication of some of the most opulent counties of England were carried on within or near to the memory of man.

"9. PLANTING is a valuable object of improvement, and is sure to repay itself in time, say fifteen to twenty years, besides a vast number of conveniences arising from it, which cannot be enjoyed without it, and the shelter and beauty it affords. I am now making above 200*l.* a-year by thinning of mountain plantations made by myself in Kerry. A twelve acre plantation has yielded 60*l.* per annum for several years, and will so continue for some years longer. I find larch and oak beyond comparison the most eligible trees to plant. Ash also, to a certain extent, is in demand. Sycamore when large is saleable to a limited extent, but is fittest for shelter about houses. Scotch fir poles will not go off so long as larch are to be had. Spruce fir requires good ground, and is esteemed rather more than Scotch, but far below larch, which is coveted for both sea and land uses. Alder poles are not esteemed till aged, but will sell low. Birch makes good couples, but beech is an almost valueless tree except on ditches for shelter. All these I sell as poles for cabin timber, at prices varying from threepence to five shillings each. In planting a mountain, care should be taken to choose a situation sheltered from the sea-breeze, to which a screen of sycamore, mixed with Scotch fir and pineaster, or stone pine, may contribute, if planted

thick. Where the soil is fit for oak, I would recommend to plant an oak at every six to twelve feet apart, plant a birch and a beech against every oak, three or four feet from it on the windward side, and fill up with larch at three or four feet distance as the ground admits. The larch plants must be *only two years* transplanted in the nursery from the seed bed, where they must stand two years, and the trees must be cut away from the oak when and as they press on them. Spots not affording soil for oak should be planted with larch alone, if any kind of soil can be found for them to be planted in under the mountain peat, and the situation be sheltered. Larch is an Alpine tree, and will thrive in the most rocky and steepest spots. It likes some peat, but not altogether. But there may be spots so exposed, barren, and mossy, as to admit only of Scotch fir, or pineaster, though worthless trees till they attain size and age; in which cases the alder is also a most valuable wood, and will grow in wet places, too poor for the black Italian poplar, which is very fit for low, fat, soft, and moist spots; such places are also fit for ash, but this is apt to be stolen for spade handles, &c., but many ash and sycamore should be raised and given to tenants to plant about their houses for shelter. A nursery is indispensable in remote situations, though it often furnishes far too many plants, and so brings those really wanted to a higher price than if purchased. The nurseryman is also prone to prefer plants most easily raised; hence Scotch

fir abounds, and larch is scarce. Trees plentiful in the nursery are planted, and the absence of true sorts is lamented, when the vast difference in their value comes to be felt. Hence it is perhaps better to buy seedlings than to raise them. The nurseryman may also fill the situation of bailiff or driver.

"I have now, my Lord, touched on so many topics, that I begin to fear your Lordship may find my paper tedious, I will, therefore, only add a hint as to the necessity of improving on a plan and outline previously laid down, and each species and head of improvement defined and limited, as far as practicable, as to extent and expense. Without this, the work becomes desultory, and is done by fits and starts, and, becoming irksome and ineffectual, is soon dropped. Nothing tends more to satisfactory results than an intelligible form of accounts, regularly and strictly kept. It must be recollected also, that time is an essential ingredient, and therefore, the great object is to institute arrangements which have *a tendency* to effect improvements in time. The general fault is endeavouring to produce an immediate visible effect. *Increase of produce* should be the thing aimed at, for on that depends the value of land, and greatly also the character of its occupiers, which will rise with their prosperity.

"But having mentioned so much of what ought to be done, I cannot omit a little warning as to what should be avoided. Thus, beware of taking

tillage land into hand to any great extent. Cultivate, if at all, only spots for locating tenants' sons, and that in the way of the country, and by the labour of poor tenants towards rents. Build as little as possible on your own account: let others do that, when buildings *are wanted;* but let them do it on your own plan, making no difference on account of the religion or politics of tenants. But I have done: and if a single idea of mine should prove useful to your Lordship, it will be a great pleasure to me.

"I have the honour to be," &c.

CHAPTER VII.

OBJECTIONS TO IMPROVEMENTS.

ALAS! the current objections to stipulations and arrangements for improvements by tenants in Ireland are still more strong and stubborn than those against leases.

The indolent or avaricious exclaim, "Oh! the thing will improve itself!" and "time will do it all!" The timid will be afraid of imposition, and will quote, "the drainage of the pocket," and other "wise saws." Others will say, "Let me know my income certain, and I'll take chance for the future." Or, "I've only a life estate, and do not care about the future." Or, "I'm mortgaged to so near the value, that improvement is no object to me." Thus may it be truly said,

> "Truths would you teach, to save a sinking land?
> All doubt, some hate you, and few understand!'

Some, like the Munster landlord, will advert to the failure of improvements, expected to be made under long leases. Others to the dilapidation and

decay of improvements when made; to the uncertainty of times admitting of increased rents when leases fall in; the expense of improvements, and consequent diminution of income; the extra agency they involve; the certainty of much cheating; the necessity of constant attention, and the like.

As a general answer to all these, and other objections, we might quote our excellent motto, that

"PROPERTY HAS ITS DUTIES AS WELL AS ITS RIGHTS."

And surely if there is one duty more urgent than another on *all* who possess landed property in Ireland, that duty must be to improve their property, and the condition of the people thereon.

How otherwise can they fulfil their *duty to God*, since to leave their people in their present degraded and abject state, without such efforts to improve them as may be within their power, is of itself a grievous offence against that God who has placed those people in their hands?

How can they discharge their *duty towards their neighbour*, unless they seek to better the condition of the neighbour who is in every spiritual, moral, and temporal sense "ready to perish," and that neighbour their tenant?

How can they fulfil their *duty towards themselves*, if they neglect sure and certain means of enriching themselves, whilst they benefit others?

How can they fulfil the *Divine* injunction "*Do unto others as you would they should do unto you*," if they leave their tenants to pine laboriously in

poverty, rags, and ignorance, not to say vice, without any effort at their emancipation?

But besides these duties, we have already shown that the improvement of landed property in Ireland, and of the people thereon, is imperative, and can no longer be safely neglected; and if we examine, seriatim, the chief heads of objection stated aforegoing, as well as others, we shall find them by no means so well founded, as, to any one predisposed to entertain them, they may at first appear.

1. Those who conclude "that the thing will improve itself in time," are practically refuted by the fact that time has done but little for the improvement of Ireland, and we have shown that the *agrarial* prosperity of the greater part of that country has retrograded, although an increased quantity of "coarse land" has been necessarily cultivated for the bare subsistence of the people. Even those formerly called "snug farmers" are now unable to pay their rents without forcing their produce and their credit, so that so far from *improving itself, the thing* will go back, and that rapidly, and *time alone* will only produce its usual effect, viz. *ruin*, instead of amendment. The steam is exhausted, and must be renewed. Something *must* be done; and we have pointed out what we can aver, from our own experience, will be sure to answer.

2. To those who say, "Let me know my income, whether small or large, and let me have nothing to

do with improvements, one-half of which may be imposition, and the other half fallacious," it may be replied, "Yes! Madam, 'twere well enough if you could 'know your income' without any of these dreaded drawbacks. But if you happened to have middleman tenants during 'the fall of times' which took place at the end of the revolutionary war, tenants who 'lived nobly and kept hounds,' as the Munster landlord had, and whose 'profit rents' seemed to be ample security for your income out of the estate, you would have then become sensible of the fallacy of *such* security without improvements, since it was then customary for such middlemen to fall into a large arrear, and then give up the land upon ejectment, racked and torn, and covered with squatter tenants." I remember in these times, a case of this kind being referred by both parties to "the saying" of O'Connell, the middleman modestly requiring an abatement of arrear and rent, to enable him to continue a profit rent. The rent was 500*l.*, the arrear over 1000*l.*, and the advice of O'Connell was that the landlord should give up the arrear, and the tenant the land. This was acted on, and both the parties thought, "a Daniel, yea, a Daniel come to judgment." But what becomes of your "certain income?" It is gone "to the four winds of heaven;" whereas, had your tenant been bound to, and guided into, improvements, such as substantial buildings, permanent fences, good drains, and sound roads, a *security* would

have been afforded for the permanency of your income.

3. Those who say, "I'll take chance for the future," ought to remember, that the future is often not so far off as people imagine; that "the changes and chances of this transitory world" often come upon us "like a thief in the night," before we are aware; that unless we bestir ourselves "whilst it is yet day," and before "the night cometh when no man can work;" unless we "timeously" set about the task of improvement, not only to afford a chance of *future* increase, but also by way of security for the *present*, we may happen to find that our carelessness of the future has led to or occasioned the loss of our present income, or at least its serious diminution.

4. It would indeed seem at first sight that the mere life-tenant in tail of an estate has but little interest in promoting improvements. But it rarely happens that such tenants are without a lively interest in the welfare of their successors. The strictest entail descends to children, relations, or near if not dear friends; and even should a life-tenant be selfish enough to regard only his own individual interests, he cannot promote *them* more than by instituting such a system of improvements as that we recommend, not only for the reasons given aforegoing, but also because, if he only reckons on the enjoyment of his estate but for a few years, it will be worth his while to keep it rising and not sinking, and to sacrifice a portion of his income, as a

security for the continuance of the remainder. But those who succeed to estates, do not feel to hold them by an ephemeral grasp. They look forward to *long years* of enjoyment; let them then "timeously" begin to render that enjoyment *secure*, and to ensure its reasonable increase.

5. Let those who are groaning under the weight of mortgage interest reflect, that a sinking security may lead to their deprivation by a foreclosure or sale, whilst even such small stimulants as they may be able to afford will establish a *tendency* to improvement, and satisfy the mortgagee; and that even *system* may do something, without much sacrifice of rent; so that, by continued operation of that system, the debt may be lightened, and by increased value of the whole, the debt may ultimately be paid off by the sale of a part of the estate.

6. But still objectors ask, "What's the use of making improvements when they are sure to fall into decay, and become worn-out and dilapidated, before a landlord can get any good of them?" We answer, Such result would be prevented by our plan of "sensible leases." According to these, buildings are to be done substantially, fences permanently, drains effectually, roads soundly; and even liming cannot be worn out upon one *term* of lease. The benefits of all these must remain for at least two such terms thereafter, and that benefit will be all the landlord's at the expiration of each of those terms.

Still there are sundry causes of failure, to which all attempts at improvement are subject. Some of these have been already touched upon; and amongst them all, none is so frequent a cause of failure, as the aiming at something grand, something that will make a show, such as buildings on the large scale, and the like, instead of those improvements which are calculated to increase the produce of the land, such as roads, in the first instance, then farm buildings on a moderate and suitable scale, adapted to the occupation, then fences, drains, and liming. It is certainly less gratifying to the improver to confine himself to these unobtrusive and almost unapparent matters, giving but little *éclat* for a long time, and even when done successfully scarcely challenging attention, for who can know the former state of ground that has been reclaimed, fenced, drained, and limed, and who therefore gives any credit to the improver? But build a church, or mansion, or an inn, and all can judge of the improver's taste and merit.

Another source of failure in effecting anything great or valuable in the way of improvement, is the falling off abruptly after a sudden effort. This is a very common and a very mischievous cause of failure, since all the expense of such *beginnings* is commonly thrown away, and they raise expectations which are not realized, and cause plans to be laid which are not carried out; nay, often occasion engagements which afterwards become ruinous to the parties, *i. e.* the tenants making them. Such

failures as these are far worse than if nothing had ever been began.

> " Drink deep or taste not"——
> " For little draughts intoxicate the brain,
> But drinking largely sobers us again."

To avoid failure, good and sensible plans must be first laid down, and then steadily *acted on* for a long time; otherwise, the abortive commencement will but put things out of sorts, without any good result.

7. The probable decay and dilapidation of improvements consequent on wear and tear, at or about the termination of a lease, weigh with some minds against making *any* improvements. But in reply to this, it may be said, that such " racking and wrecking" arises chiefly from the bad practice which we seek to alter, and from the defects of the relation of landlord and tenant, which we seek to amend. At present it is not usual for landlords to participate in the expense of buildings, *therefore* they are wretched in the extreme; and wretched as they are, they are considered by the tenant (*maugrè* the *law* of the case) to be his property; and we have known tenants on their death-bed distribute the " couples" (pairs of rafters) of his cabin amongst his relations by nuncupative will. Indeed, so completely are the materials of erections built *entirely* by a tenant considered to be his property, although the wood has been dug from the landlord's bog, that he always takes them away on quitting. This is not the case when the landlord

has contributed. But if, according to our plan of management, the tenant had a fair chance of remaining on the land at the expiration of the lease, by a renewal thereof, no such "rack and wreck" would take place, but, on the contrary, the landlord would have the best security for the preservation of buildings, fences, and land, viz. the *tenant's interest.* Besides, as we have already stated, the improvements contemplated by the operation of our system are to be sound, substantial, and permanent, and the amount of dilapidations to be recoverable by law.

8. The uncertainty of *the times*, i.e. prices of agricultural produce, being such as to allow of an advance of rent at the termination of a term of twenty-one years spent in mutual efforts of improvement by landlord and tenant, is another ground of objection to such efforts being made. This objection is, however, extremely fallacious, since a little reflection makes it evident that the increased produce must always ensure a continuance of the rent, whilst the rent of other farms, whose produce is not increased, must fall; and that an estate "holding its own" rent, instead of a diminished rent, is, in fact, in as good a position as if an advance had taken place to the amount of the diminution which must otherwise have been suffered. Thus, if a farm at 100*l.* a-year rent holds, by the effect of the improving system, its 100*l.* a-year, whilst similar farms are reduced to 75*l.*, the improvements will have created 25*l.* a-year rent,

just as much as if *times* had allowed the 100*l.* to be advanced to 125*l.* Besides, the 100*l.* will be paid upon the improved farm by increased produce during the whole term; whereas, on the unimproved farm, not more than the 75*l.* can be paid, say, for the last seven years of the lease, and the gain by improvement will be 175*l.*, or, what is the same thing, a loss to that amount will be prevented.

9. The next plea of objectors to our system is, the danger of imposition and cheating in claims made and allowed for improvements which have never been performed. But we submit that, with only an ordinary share of vigilance, little of such cheating can be practised, and none can be continued to any extent. I have been in the habit of having dispensed over one portion of an estate in Ireland, consisting of about 9,000 acres, of which one-third may be wild mountain, about 10,000 barrels of lime yearly, for the first fourteen of a twenty-one years' lease, each barrel containing five gallons. At first all the neighbours chuckled at the very idea of what impositions would be practised; after a time I was assured, by those very neighbours, that the lime allowed was honestly laid out, and more besides; and, subsequently, I found that, in fact, the benefits of lime were so strongly felt and so well understood by the tenants, that they "laid out" a great deal more than was allowed to them; and, in general, I am quite sure that the extra improvements made by any set of tenants, over and above the quantity allowed

for, will exceed *by tenfold* the amount of those petty impositions which will always, to a certain extent, take place in *every* transaction.

Another species of cheating may be dreaded by some, viz. that by the agents employed to carry these improvements and allowances into effect. But where a respectable agent sees generally that the thing is done, and employs a trustworthy dependent to ascertain quantities; when the agent also takes a voucher from the tenant, with full particulars, in the nature of a bill and receipt, there can be little danger of a malversation which would place him in the power of a tenant whom he is daily threatening to distrain.

10. But still say the reluctant converts to our system, "What expenses are you for plunging us into! What diminution of incomes, already too scanty for our wants, and far too little for our wishes! How can we spare for improvements when we have not enough already to meet our present pressing exigencies?" Now, this is putting an extreme case, and yet the system we recommend is applicable to it, as already shown; since it will be only allowing for improvements what would otherwise be lost in arrears. And however low the means of a landlord may be, the preservation and increase of those means become the more important to him. He is therefore prompted by the most powerful motives to assist his tenants by allowances out of their rents to the utmost of his ability, and besides that, to give much of his own personal atten-

tion to the matter, leading on, directing, instructing and encouraging his tenants, by which means much may be done.

But we are not to reckon on the majority of cases as thus extreme. The greater number of cases, and those by far of the greatest extent, wherein any desire is likely to be awakened for any great and effectual improvements, will be landlords with "all appliances and means to boot," and it is rather to *direct* than to increase the *expenses* which this class do already voluntarily incur, that our system aims. We recommend roads, farm buildings, fences, drains, and liming, instead of ostentatious works; and at what expense? Let us take an income or rental of 1,000*l.* a-year. This in England would scarcely ever realize or net to the private use of the landlord more than 750*l.*, the rest going in building, repairing, &c., and in taxes, agency, &c. But the Irish landlord expects "a penny rent," *i. e.* to receive every penny, less agency fees; and when his lands are greatly underlet, as on very long leases at nominal rents, he may do this; but we are now treating of the case of *occupying tenants* at rack rents; and, for the sake of argument, let us imagine the landlord willing to place himself on the footing of the English landlord, in this as well as other resemblances, and to receive a net 750*l.* out of every 1,000*l.*, the remaining sum, after providing for agency fees, &c., could not be more advantageously disposed of than in roads, building, in schools and medical assistance, and in allowances

to tenants for fences, drains, and lime; and we have the authority of *experience* to say, that the 1,000*l.* a year would almost infallibly be increased to 1,250*l.* a-year by the end of a twenty-one years' lease, *and besides*, during that lease, the tenants would willingly pay 10 per cent. more current rent than they would or could without these improvements and allowances. The account therefore would stand thus:—

Allowed during the lease—	£
£250 a-year, 21 years	5,250
Less 10 per cent. more rent, 21 years	2,100
Actual cost	£3,150

But the value in fee simple of an additional rent of 250*l.* per annum created at this expense, would bring thirty years' purchase, on an improved or improving well-tenanted estate. This is 7,500*l.* gained, but the cost 3,150*l.* brings the balance of gain down to 4,350*l.*, a very respectable sum as a mere money matter; but when we add to it the moral and national benefits of thus proceeding, the monetary benefit will sink into a *comparatively* insignificant consideration. But vastly greater benefits than this are actually produced by judicious improvement of lands, by means of tenants, even in a monetary point of view, and we cannot help quoting an instance which, though not in Ireland, may stimulate to similar attempts in that country with similar success. The eastern lowlands of England, com-

prising parts of the counties of Lincoln, Cambridge, Norfolk, and Suffolk, and some others adjacent, contain between 400,000 and 500,000 acres of level *fen* (bog) land, the peat or moor being from 4 to 8 feet deep, on a bottom or floor of blue calcareous clay. This clay is raised upon the surface at an expense of about *3l.* to *5l.* per acre, and the result is the immediate *advance* of from *20s.* to *25s.* per acre upon its former rental value. I have been instrumental in covering about 1200 acres in this manner, at an expense to the landlord of *2l.* per acre, the tenant bearing all other expenses, and having a fourteen years' lease at *5s.* to *8s.* per acre, its full value. Here, then, is an advance of at least 35,000*l.* on the 1,200 acres, viz. *20s.* per acre at thirty years' purchase, and at an expense of only 3,000*l.* "Facts are stubborn things," and such a fact ought to silence the objection to improvement on the score of expense. At all events, we think our position "proven," viz. that judicious expenses are most amply repaid.

Such bog improvements may not be always practicable in Ireland, by reason of the earthy floor lying too deep, but they afford the hint of digging up what earthy matter lies within reach, and portable railways might be used to cover the deeper spots. At all events, bogs soon resume their pristine state, if not abundantly earthed on their surface and completely drained.

11. It may be asked, how shall we obtain agents sufficiently "knowledgeable," as the Scotch

say, and trustworthy for this important service? There is certainly a difficulty in this, since an agent must, under our system, have a taste for improvement, together with discretion for its guidance. But how have the English got over this difficulty? Simply by attending to the matter, and as "there are in the sea as good fish as ever came out of it," so there are as good agents to be found for Ireland as have effected the same kind of services in England, especially as scientific information is now more generally diffused, and the competition for employment greater. After all, indeed, this point of agency is one of the utmost importance in every point of view. We have already mentioned it aforegoing, and have only here to add our advice, that an agent should be so well paid as to leave him no excuse for bribes of any kind, and that he should enjoy the full confidence of his principal.

12. There is, however, one objection to the system we recommend, which it would be inconsistent with the candour we have hitherto used not to mention, and this is—that during the operation of this system, for the first few years, the tenants will find themselves cramped for ready money, wherewith to pay their rents, inasmuch as they will have disbursed so much of their ordinary means in the improvements which we contemplate, before the fructification of those improvements takes place. Nothing, however, but a little patience on the part of the landlord is requisite to meet this case; and we can hardly conceive any landlord so blind to his

own interest, as not only not to forbear "cutting up the goose with the golden egg," but also as not to wait for her hatching.

13. But still another objection may be made. It may be asked, Would you have us undertake to furnish a thousand families on one estate with houses, and place a complete set of outbuildings on a farm of ten or a dozen acres? Not exactly that; but you may gradually assist in doing all this. "Where there's a will there's a way." You may give a few poles out of your plantations for the hut, not house, which your smallest tenant requires; this may be built on such a situation and on such a plan, that it might serve for a range of out-offices as soon as the fencing, draining, and liming, and better farming of the land, shall have enabled your tenant to build a slated house, or at least a better hut, for his family, towards which the better payment of his rent will enable you to contribute, say one year's rent in six half-yearly instalments; or you may keep a few carpenters at work, making doors and windows, and a pair or two of sawyers to saw timber for roofs, which will be provided by the tenants themselves in some cases, in others not. To some you may give one thing, some another, and these helps may be doled out according to circumstances, with such discretion, that *in time* all your tenants may be provided, be they ever so numerous. Besides, if your lands are parcelled out in such small patches, the rents thereof are high accordingly, and much higher than they could be if those lands

were let in large farms; therefore you are able to afford some assistance out of the extra rent thus obtained. Small efforts *constantly* repeated will do a great deal, and the zeal of the tenants will soon outstrip your own.

14. Another may ask, How can you expect to change the *habits* of a people? If they choose to live and lie in dirt and filth, and inhale peat smoke; if they are content with potato diet; if they like to be clothed in rags, how can you help it? can you "wash the blackamoor white?" We answer, that this is but begging the question. "Their poverty, and not their will, consents." Poverty has for ages pressed them down into grovelling habits, and poverty keeps them fast bound in those habits, which have become so much the *usual* manner of living in the country, that even those not poor adopt them. The only wonder is that the spirit as well as the habits of the people has not become grovelling; this is a miracle which seems to indicate that the great Ruler of the universe intends, in his own good time, their emancipation from a state of physical misery. Relief by a poor-law is one step towards this. Those of whom it may be said "sharp misery hath worn them to the bones," will be thus struck off the miserable muster roll; and the next grade, the squatter, will be regulated and, we trust, helped. The cottar labourer will be enabled to feed and lodge his family, and "learn to venerate himself as man." Their meliorations will alone tend to

improve the grades above them, and according to the usual operation of the human mind, farmers, farms, and farming, would improve much more rapidly by lifting the grades below them, than by increasing the grandeur of those above them.

It is true, that time is a very important element in improving on or even altering any kind of habit, and it takes more than one generation to alter generally received opinions, however erroneous. But that which is never begun in earnest, will never be accomplished; and there is nothing that will alter the habits of the people so quickly as the amendment of their condition, and nothing so well calculated to accomplish that as the measures which we herein recommend.

CHAPTER VIII.

GENERAL AND CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS.

But, after all these triumphant answers to all the objections that can be made to our system for improving the landed property of Ireland, and with that all other kind of property, besides the habits and comforts of the people, it may still be matter of wonder how it should happen that, whilst England should be so advanced in civilization and agriculture, Ireland should be so backward in both; and still matter of doubt, whether there be not something in the nature of the country, as in the genius of the people, which radically prevents the advance of either; and whether it be not "warring against nature," to attempt accelerating their progress. We hold, however, that there is a certain point of civilization and of agriculture that may be called the *point of acceleration*, which once reached, their

progress onward is so certain, that little impetus is afterwards required.

> "There is a tide in the affairs of men,
> Which taken at the flood leads on to fortune."

The tide of the affairs of Ireland does not seem to have ever yet reached "the flood:" still—

> "The current of its course ——
> Is bound in shallows and in miseries."

What we have designated its "monster misery," is the bad state of the relation of landlord and tenant. What we now call *the point of acceleration* may most assuredly be reached by those amendments of this relation which we have laid down. These amendments once achieved in the general practice of landlords, think what general industry will be its result,—what prosperity,—what respectability of character arising from prosperity,—what enjoyment from competence the result of industry,—what mutual good feelings from mutual co-operation of landlord and tenant,—what overflowing plenty of all the products of the earth,—what riches flowing in from the superabundance,—what improvement in the *diet* of the Irish farmer and labourer,—what home consumption of corn and cattle,—what amendment of their health and character thence arising,—what change in their clothing,—what consequent demand for manufactures of all kinds,—what general increase of individual enterprise; and hence,—what arts cultivated,—what inventions made,—what machinery established,—what contentment diffused,

—what anarchy suppressed, — what intelligence spread,—what enlightenment dawning throughout the length and breadth of a happy land!

Nor are these Utopian expectations or extravagant predictions, for I have realized as many of these features as could find place in the comparatively small scale of 9,000 acres, on a wild mountain district of Munster, whereon about fifteen miles of new road have been made at the landlord's expense, and under his direction. The lands were duly set out and fenced, *suitable* buildings erected, drains made, and a sufficient quantity of lime allowed to each farm yearly. The result is everything that could be wished or expected. Peace, previously a stranger to the place, has been established; prosperity has taken the place of poverty; industry, of idleness; punctuality of payment has succeeded to arrears; respectability of conduct and character, to turbulence and outrage; decency of attire, to the rags of profligacy; temperate good living, to the uncertain scantiness of potatoes and sour milk; a reading club, and a temperance music meeting have been established, where before the brawls of drunkenness and the fights of faction filled up the intervals of nocturnal Whiteboy drills.

Yet, after all, the Government seems to feel it *must* issue a Commission; for they must have *facts* to legislate upon, *facts* collected under *authority* and condensed into a *Report*, in a "*blue-book*," in due form, with an *Appendix* containing the *Evidence*. And what is the probable evidence? Why

of persons who are anxious to uphold the present state of things. But *who* will come forward to condemn or even to blame that state? *Who* will have courage to say to the landholders—"You have been always wrong, are still wrong, and must be set right in the management of your estates?" What tenant will *dare* to complain of his landlord or his agent? What agent will be disinterested enough to *see* things in their true light, much less *describe* them so? Who indeed can give in evidence before such Commission, so comprehensive and elaborate, though still inadequate, an approximation to "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth," as is contained in this Treatise; or who indeed *can* bestow the time, the thought, and the labour, to digest and arrange it, even if they possessed the requisite knowledge of facts and experience in the workings of plans for improving Ireland and the Irish? A *vivâ voce* witness is hurried, has not time to digest his thoughts, nor to detail his experience—and 'tis not every one that *can* do so, before the awful tribunal of "most potent, grave, and reverend seignors," thus assembled, although they may also be "our very noble and approved good masters." Besides, what *other* Curtius will leap into the gulph? Alas! therefore all that can be expected of any Commission of Inquiry is are cord of such facts and opinions as may *tend* to rebut what has been called "calumnies" against the Irish landlords.—"The object of the Commission," says the "Dublin Evening Mail,"

"will be to disabuse the public mind of the calumnies that have been put forth against the Irish landlords upon the one hand, as well as to suggest remedial measures for any real grievances that may be found to exist upon the other. And *if* the *means* for procuring extensive and accurate information be supplied with a liberal and generous hand; *if* strict impartiality and a rigid adherence to justice characterize the proceedings of the Commissioners; *if* there be no effort to gloss over tyranny, or encourage oppression, should it be found to exist on the part of the landlord; or any attempt at displays of tawdry sentimentality, or wooing mob popularity, by yielding to the unreasonableness or conceding to the clamour of the tenant;"—if all these *ifs* are fulfilled, this Commission may do much good—*i. e.* *if* the Commission probe wounds which there is reason to fear will be concealed from its view—*if* it suggest remedies for evils which it will never hear of —*if* it exercises a sound judgment on facts of which it never will be cognizant. But "if me no ifs!" Can this Commission dive into the secret workings of the human heart? Can it search there for that black spot which is the abode of avarice and the throne of tyranny, deeming its lands "all too cheap," when affording only dry potatoes to their cultivators? But avoiding "tawdry sentimentality," will they not, in Grand Jury language, "*find*" the misery of the people owing *to* the people? Will they not act on the "foregone conclusion" that rents in Ireland are as low as in England, all things

considered? I fear that all their zeal will not save the country from this conclusion; and if so, the doom of Ireland is sealed for centuries, as a poor, discontented, retrograding country. But why should this Commission, I hear you ask, come to conclusions so much more erroneous than yourself? I answer; because its inquiries must be hurried and limited as to time; whereas its objects require the study and experience of many years: because the affair is pressing and immediate; whereas this Commission could not possibly go through their labours properly within a year: because the winter is no time to prosecute such inquiries in Ireland, and in that season the Commission issues: because the poor man's voice will not be heard there; nor will he who is in moral bondage to his landlord dare to complain of his fetters, or, in recent parliamentary language, "clank his chains;" because the true plaintiff in this case will not be admitted into court; whilst the defendant will give evidence on his own behalf: because the class who will press forward to give evidence, will be those who hold on this matter that "whatever *is* is right:"—because in such inquiries a statement of facts is often voted to be only "isolated instances;" whilst, without them, "where are your facts?" is the cry: and, finally, because it requires more of moral courage to adopt the tone of condemnation than can reasonably be expected, especially where there is really so much to be commended in particular instances. But still you say,—What would you

have? How can Government do better than issue a Commission to inquire into the *truth?* Right, *Government* cannot possibly *do better.* It will gain a session *in time,* which is something. It will gain a possibility of change in the councils of the enemy, and any change *must be a gain.* It will gain the possibility of a *tire* in the people of that which gives them nothing at present but *hope,* and this every *day* growing more *dim* and *shadowy.* It will gain the "prestige" of calmness, and coolness, and inquiry, and investigation, and deliberation, and consideration, and wise caution, and so forth. But is delay wisdom? Is armed caution remedy? When Lycurgus was complimented on the laws he gave the Athenians, he said, sensibly enough, "I have given them the best they could bear." We may infer, I think, from this, that he had studied them. Napoleon, in modern times, said, "I have studied, and will study *the genius* of my people." Lycurgus, and Solon, and Napoleon, were not driven by the complication of the affairs of their states to depute their inquiries to commissions, though we must admit that the affairs of the latter lawgiver were both complicated and important. But in these times, and in this vast national *world,* where is the Atlas that can uphold it without *props,* the props of committees and commissions? Such props are, doubtless, often not only useful but necessary; but they are going too far, and are not always applicable or right.

Nothing, indeed, can be easier than to anticipate

the outline of their Report, viz. "That they have received with the greatest satisfaction evidence of so many well authenticated instances of good landlordism, as to give *that* character to the general management of estates; whilst, at the same time, they admit, with pain, many opposite instances. Yet, relying on the good sense of the country, the Commissioners feel assured that considerations of humanity and good policy *will* prevail, as soon as peace and quietness are established in the land."

This is not the way that the great and glorious minister, Pitt, proceeded,—that "pilot who weathered the storm" delegated his powers to nobody. He was his own committee and commission. He found out men to be depended on (if indeed they were to be found). He examined them himself. He himself weighed their evidence, and took it only for what it was worth. He himself came to his own conclusions, and acted on them. This was true greatness. Here was the man of business. Here was the knowledge of human nature. His eloquence was subordinate to his tact, though his eloquence was transcendant as the noonday sun. In his general policy, also, how much he differed from a late ministry; who, adopting the motto of Francis Moore, physician, in his Almanack, have mistaken the "vox populi" for the "vox Dei," have governed accordingly, and accordingly have governed wrong, the governors allowing themselves to be led, and of course misled by the governed; as well as from the present Ministry, who seem too

fast reducing our insular superiority in wealth and power to the continental standard! He saw that a country physically small, but morally, and therefore politically great, could only have become great, and can only maintain its greatness, by a high-toned system, as much beyond the average of Europe, as our wealth and power is above that average. But we are now, it seems, to sell our corn and our meat at the continental prices, though costing nearly twice as much to produce here as there, and that chiefly in consequence of our having expended some hundreds of millions to save those countries from being enslaved by a conqueror. We are now also to hold out the boon of free trade to other nations, whilst they strengthen their "tariffs" against us. We are to lose our commanding position amongst nations, and fall into the ranks as privates, according to the "national school" of that modern *low régime*, which must ruin Ireland, and will impoverish England. Not that this is the fault, but the misfortune of those in power, controlled as they are by a "fourth estate."

Well, you say, you have had your burst! Now what would you have done by this Commission? Why, we would have the Commissioners believe nobody, but see, hear, and judge for themselves, amongst all sorts of tenantry, large and small, viz. those of the rich plains, the thin-soiled slopes, and the barren hills,—tenants of the coast, tenants of the inland, tenants of the mountain, and tenants

of the vale, occupying under head landlords and under middlemen, under residents and under absentees, under leases and under tenancy-at-will, under the custom of tenant-right, and where it does not prevail,—occupiers in Munster, in Leinster, in Ulster, and Connaught, distinguishing the eastern, western, and the central, the limestone, and the non-calcareous portions of those provinces. I would have them distinguish between the occupiers of grass-lands and of tillage-lands in each district, and where these are mixed in certain proportions;—where corn is the principal produce, discriminating between the wheat and the oat districts, and where lands are exhausted with over-cropping;—where sheep are the principal stock, as about and to the west of Ballinasloe;—where cows are dairied for butter, as over the south and west of Munster;—where oxen are fed for the meat-markets, as in Meath, Tipperary, and Limerick;—where young cattle are reared for stock, as over the whole range of western mountains. Having classified the occupiers of land by these data, they should make themselves masters of the actual state and condition of all these and other classes of occupiers, as to their rents, value of saleable produce to pay that rent, and other unavoidable expenses;—habitations and farming buildings, whether adequate or not, and whether supplied with or without the assistance of the landlords;—manures, how obtained and applied;—drainings, how effected;—fencing, how accomplished;—shelter, how provided. Having

acquired this knowledge, the Commissioners should proceed to compare the share of produce allowed to the occupying tenant in Ireland with the share allowed to him in England, and taking into account all the matters in which he is assisted by the landlord in both cases, the Commissioners should report on the *relative situation* of the tenantry of both countries, *all things* considered. Next they should consider and report on what legislative measures would be most likely to check an inordinate exaction of rent, or other oppressions on the part of the landlord or his agent; what would promote *sensible leases;* what would encourage allowances towards improvements; or what would *in any way* better the condition of the Irish tenantry and their dependents, as to their habitations, their clothing, their diet, their habits, their farming, and all other matters appertaining to the relation of landlord and tenant.

Methinks I hear you exclaim, Why, you have chalked out a thirty years' perambulation and study of the country for a Commission which is to sit and report during one session! To be sure I have; and nothing else will fully answer the purpose!

The Commissioners in this most important matter have undertaken an awful trust! The destiny of the agrarial population of Ireland seems, in my mind, to be at their disposal. The future comforts of millions of their fellow-creatures, their fate in this world, if not in the next, trembles in

that balance which they have had the courage to take into their hands. In the one scale is a mistaken view of interest to justify and to preserve the present revenues from land; not self-interest, for that would weigh but lightly, but the whole weight of the landed interest in Ireland, and not only as to revenue, but as to the character of past management. And as no inconsiderable make-weight in *this* scale, is the total unconsciousness of anything wrong in that management, and the utter distastefulness of adopting any suggestion by way of improving on it, and more especially if that suggestion combats early prejudices. Alas! these are fearfully weighty considerations to occupy one scale of the balance. Now, what's in the other? Poverty, lightly-esteemed poverty, alone; looked on too long to be regarded with concern, become familiarized to our eyes, considered a necessary evil, perhaps a negative good. I am "fearfully afraid" that this is the scale which will kick the beam, because, though the scales will be held by Justice, the bandage before her eyes will not let her see that this should be the scale in which the *real and true* interest of landed property should be placed.

> "Still Justice, though she's painted blind,
> Is to the weaker side inclined,
> Like Charity; else right and wrong
> Could never hold it out so long."

Let us, then, hope for the best; and look for the result without fear, but not without solicitude.

In conclusion, addressing the landlord of Ireland, I may now ask, with the Orientalist, What can I say more? "The bane and antidote are set before you," and may the grace of God open your intellectual eyes to the one, and his goodness and mercy direct your feeling hearts to the earnest adoption and right use of the other; at all events, I have not

> "——— Let the candied tongue lick absurd pomp,
> Nor crooked the ready hinges of the knee,
> Where thrift may follow fawning."

To the tenant, whose cause I have herein espoused, I may well say,

> ——— "Nay, do not think I flatter:
> For what advancement may I hope from thee,
> That no revenue hast, but thy *good spirits*,
> To feed and clothe thee?"

But alas! what chance is there, after all, of any considerable alteration being effected in the established practices between landlord and tenant? "Can a man by taking thought add one cubit to his stature?" or, "Can the leopard change his spots, or the Ethiopian his colour?" No, but as the established practices throughout the world have in time given way to more reasonable ones, and as the habits of mankind alter yearly, daily, and hourly, though imperceptibly, so the desired alterations may be brought about in Ireland in spite of all obstacles. Why should it not be written, since the fact is, that English customs, English opinions, and English practices are hated

by the Irish, and nothing could be more judicious than to adopt the catchwords, "Ireland for the Irish." They will have it, as Lever says, that "the English know as much about Pat, as Pat knows of purgatory." This feeling is much against the adoption of any plans or modes of proceeding which may be understood to be English. But where such plans and modes have stood the test of experience, and have been proved beneficial and profitable in every point of view, it might be reasonably hoped that they would find favour in the eyes of the Irish, and be adopted by them. It must, however, be confessed that the chances are greatly to the contrary, and that "things as they are" will be very much the order of the day until worse ensues. Those, however, who have the prosperity of Ireland at heart, can do no more than warn and instruct, and this I have herein done with a zeal and earnestness proportioned to the deep sense I entertain of the vast importance of the subject. It is, to be sure, scarcely feasible that the habits of a whole people, confirmed by centuries, should be suddenly changed, without that sort of popular convulsion which goes by the name of *Revolution*, and which now-a-days is brought about without the accompaniment of a guillotine. Revolution—thanks to the energy and wisdom of our rulers,—is placed "afar off." There is, therefore, no alternative but warning and instruction, which, however generally disregarded, will perhaps meet with individual attention in proportion to its

truth, its adaptation to circumstances, and consequently its practicability. This individual attention will lead to instances of practice, which, again, by the force of successful example, will propagate, and thus may every single effort to teach "the good and the right way" be attended with *some* portion of success, until the whole of the great and splendid country of Ireland shall be agrarially regenerated. Which may God of his infinite mercy grant to our earnest prayers through the labours of this Commission!

After having thus freely poured forth my feelings in favour of Ireland and the Irish, I cannot refrain from adding the warning of a friend as to the inutility of the attempt, although I have ventured, from a somewhat Quixotic spirit, to disregard his friendly advice. He says—"So you are going to print a Treatise on the Relation of Landlord and Tenant in Ireland. Very patriotic and philanthropic, truly! but, let me ask, *Cui bono?* You certainly intend some good, either to yourself or to the Irish, perhaps to both, although you disavow any selfish motive, and quote the sage maxim of 'Blessed is he that expecteth nothing, for he shall not be disappointed.' Well! let that pass; only advising that, if you do make the attempt, you don't forget the maxim. Then, as to benefiting the Irish, you seem to have forgotten all the bulky tomes that have been already written about Ireland, and with how little effect. Nobody minds them, if anybody reads, or ever did read

them. What is Ireland now the better for all the castigations which its landlords have received from every writer, from Dean Swift downward to the ponderous volumes of Wakefield? Have rents been mitigated, or tenants more encouraged? No! but the contrary. Do you think that the natural desire for all the rent that can be got, joined to the absolute power of obtaining it, will cease at your bidding? 'Because thou art virtuous, shall there be no more cakes and ale? aye! and ginger shall be hot i' th' mouth too!' But you are to teach landlords their duty forsooth! My dear fellow, they know their duties well enough, or at least quite as much of them as they care to know, or are likely to practice. One may truly say of them,

> 'They know what's right, and they commend it too,
> Condemn the wrong, yet still the wrong pursue.'

'Oh! but,' say you, 'it's not so much their duty as their interests, that I wish to point out to them.' How very much obliged to you they'll be, truly! Won't they feel it a compliment that you should affect to know their interests better than themselves? But you seem to think that you have stumbled on the discovery of some grand remote interests of theirs not hitherto discovered by themselves, but somewhat clashing with present interests. My dear sir, do you affect to know Ireland, and advise the exchange of an interest in *esse* for one in *posse*? Heaven save the mark! Johanna Southcote was not more visionary! Is not

'a bird in the hand worth two in the bush?' Could you strike out a mode of advancing rents *instanter*, that indeed would be something of 'the voice of the charmer;' but talk of doing this *in futuro*, and you may expect only 'the deaf adder which stoppeth her ears,' for your 'charming' will be deemed anything but 'wise.' Besides, my dear sir, your Essay is and must be necessarily uncomplimentary, to say the least of it; therefore not likely to have any 'winning ways' with those you seek to convert. You ask:—'Would you have me flatter?'—not at all! To flatter unskilfully is very dangerous, and will not suit your 'vein.' To blame is equally dangerous, therefore you place yourself 'between Scylla and Charybdis,' with what chance of escape I leave you to determine. 'Still,' say you, 'something must be done, or the people will shake off the burthens which they can bear no longer.' Shake a fiddlestick! Is not the country thronged with troops enough to keep the burthen on their shoulders? 'Very true,' you say, 'but it is not intended to *dragoon* the Irish into anything; and, as a proof, a Commission has been issued to inquire into the case, and you wish to assist their labours.' Ah! my friend, Heaven help your head! Do you think they want any such assistance? Not a bit of it! Surely you have had enough of truth-telling and candour, and experience, and matter of fact, and warnings of danger, and all that sort of thing, before other Commissions and Com-

mittees. What, therefore, prompts you to meddle between landlord and tenant? let them fight it out, whilst your head is unbroken. Why, in the first place, this Commission is not likely ever to see your Essay, at least, beyond its cover; and, in the next, for them, or any of them, to 'read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest' its contents, is more than even the vanity of an author can expect. Their minds are doubtless already made up, and all they want is supporters. 'But,' say you, again, 'the public mind of England may be enlightened on the subject.' My good sir, the public mind of England is sick of Ireland; and the English public has been so crammed *ad nauseam* with Irish affairs, that its mind is very much like that of the mate of a ship entering the Bay of Dublin, to whom the captain said, 'That's a fine country; what do you think is the best that could be done for it?'—'Why, captain,' said the mate, 'in my opinion, the best that could be done for it, would be to scuttle and keep it twenty-four hours under water.' I know what you would say,—that the excited demand for Mr. Montgomery Martin's work seems to prove the contrary. Granted, but he is an author known, and admitted into the pale, on the outside of which you stand shivering and alone. Still you will have it that truth and reason must and will ultimately prevail, however long they may remain obscured. Bless your honest heart, what have you to do with truth and reason? Truth lies at the bottom of a well,

and it will be quite as well for you not to run the risk of drowning in trying to fish it up; or, at least, 'may be' you'll break your shins against the edge of the bucket. Alas! truths when unwelcome offend one half the world, and excite the pity of the other half, that any one should be guilty of such bootless boldness as their propagation. And as for reason, who authorized you to set up for a judge of reason, or what is reasonable and what is not so? The majority always carries that point, and it is in vain for you to oppose your feeble minority against a majority of pounds-shillings-and-pence men. No, sir! If you, like Marryat, inculcated political economy and morals, and taught geography and navigation in well-written novels; if you, like Miss Edgeworth, could illustrate landlord, tenant, and Irish manners by an amusing book; or, like Miss Martineau, dress up truth and reason in a story, then indeed your truth and reason might be *scanned* at least, but who ever heard of *naked* truth and reason being offered up to aristocratic guests?—why, such a dish is worse than dry potatoes, without the relish of a herring. Alas! reasons, if given ever so reasonably, make but little impression on established habits and settled opinions, and even if they convince,

> 'A man convinced against his will,
> Is of the same opinion still.'

And you set up for a lawgiver too! Why, sir, that's the easiest trade going; it is carried on with

little or no capital of any kind. Squire Western bids Parson Adams cease his learned discourse, 'and talk of the affairs of the nation, as of something that every body understands.' And every body now-a-days understands those affairs better than their own. Why, indeed, should they not, when they have only to read the leading articles of the leading journals which they honour with their patronage, and their apprenticeship to this trade is soon served. It is a pity the business is neither profitable, nor, just now, very respectable, and moreover so greatly overstocked, that the commodity is at a ruinous discount, and the market so glutted, that you cannot get a sample looked at, much less bulk taken off your hands. After all it comes to this; you say rents are too high. The majority of Irish landlords say they are not, for them at least. You recommend leases. The majority of Irish landlords say they can do without them. You urge the advantages of allowances, for improvements. The majority of Irish landlords say, they do not approve of such allowances and will continue to 'get all they can,' and to 'do what they will with their own.' Now, do you think the Commissioners will disagree with the majority of their own order, and agree with you? If you do, then say I, 'the force of folly can no farther go.' No! my friend, your intentions are doubtless good, but let me remind you that 'hell is paved with good intentions,' not that such a place or fate has anything to do with your lucubrations, except in the resemblance that may

arise from their lighting a cigar, or being otherwise assigned to the 'bottomless pit.' But believe me, the majority of landlords will carry the Commissioners along with them; the Commissioners will carry the Government; the Government will carry the Parliament; the Parliament will pass laws; and the army will 'carry arms' to enforce them. You yourself run the hazard of being ranked amongst the malcontents. You intend only to warn the sleeping inmates of the house of the danger of fire, but you will incur the danger of suspicion as the incendiary; and though you may escape hanging, you will be 'drawn and quartered' without mercy. When you approach, therefore, like Christian, the Giant's Castle, beware of 'the lions at the gate.' 'Ay, ay,' say you still, 'but I shall have the tenants on my side, and they are the majority, since you talk of that.' Alas! you forget that numbers only never win the battle, it is the weight of metal, not the number, and that's against you. 'Oh! but,' you say, 'my opinion has been listened to, my evidence quoted at some length in every book on Ireland since 1830, and my practice lately recommended in several leading journals.' True, but the books have had their day without any good to you; and the 'leading journals' are some radical newspapers, that will never reach the 'landed interest;' besides why should you, like Don Quixote, attack the windmills; or, like Hudibras, thrust yourself into an

'Adventure of the bear and fiddle?'

In the Lough Foyle Embankment Committee, being in fact an enthusiast in favour of such matters, experienced and skilled therein, your *intention* was to warn the adventurers against the dangers they were about to encounter, and to point out to them the means by which they could securely accomplish their purpose. You must recollect the upshot, viz. your opinion was taken as altogether hostile to the project, and you found yourself in the situation of Hudibras and Ralph, encountering a procession,

> 'With which adventuring to stickle,
> Were sent away in nasty pickle.'

It is true that your opinion has since turned out to be right, and will anon prove more so, but what compensation is that to you for those

> '————Eggs let fly,' which
> 'Hit you directly in the eye?'

Sir, those who intermeddle in 'things as they are,' or presume to differ from the maxim, that 'whatsoever is, is right,' should recollect that,

> 'If any yet be so fool-hardy
> T'expose themselves to vain jeopardy,
> If they come wounded off and lame
> No honour's got by such a maim.'

Still you contend that, having been doing all the good you possibly could to Ireland and the Irish for thirty years and more, you have a right to expect some grateful attentions to what you have to say. Why, sir, you mistake the thing entirely,

that is the very reason why they want no more of you, seeing that they have already got so much, for,

'Let not virtue seek remuneration for the thing it was.
The selfish world gives to the dust that is a little gilt,
More laud, than e'en to gold o'er dusted.'

Still less tenable is your plea of treating your subject as a no-party man; both parties join against the man who dares to say they're both wrong, by joining neither. 'Those who are not for us are against us,' is an old party maxim, and, like interference between man and wife, both parties join to cudgel the middleman between two parties.

'Those who 'tween parties interpose
Are sure to get a bloody nose.'

Sir, it is lucky your Irish avocations do not lie in Tipperary, for there they always for the best first incur

'The deep damnation of their cutting off.'

Oh! yes! now you fume and chafe at any slur on your favourite Irish; but know, that you yourself should recollect that 'the pitcher never goes so often to the well but it's broke at last,' and Irish cunning is quite equal to the task of turning half civilized friends into mortal enemies. But I've done, once and again advising you 'to give it up.'"

So far my friend, to whose epistle the following reply was made; which is here given as my best apology for appearing in print after so sensible an admonition. "Although almost every word you have written is nearly unanswerable, yet my vanity

in thinking that Ireland and the Irish may possibly be benefited by my Essay, remains unconquered and uncured, being of Shakspere's opinion, that

> "There is a history in all men's lives,
> Figuring the nature of the times deceased,
> The which observed, a man may prophesy
> With a near aim, of the main chance of things
> As yet not come to life; which in their seeds
> And weak beginnings lie entreasured.
> Such things become the hatch and brood of time."

Now the peculiar "history of my life" with reference to Ireland, "figuring the nature of the times deceased," the which I have "observed," leads me to the conclusion that the aspect of the present times—the crisis which the Commission of Inquiry forms, and all the circumstances of the case, are such as may enable me "to prophecy with a near aim the main chance of things," viz.—that in the present "seeds and weak beginnings lie entreasured," though "as yet not come to life," the regeneration of Ireland by means of the cure of the "monster misery." If such a thing is destined to "become the hatch and brood of time," no exertions, and no sacrifice of mine will be deemed too great to afford the slightest chance of aid towards such a glorious incubation.

THE END.

R. CLAY, PRINTER, BREAD STREET HILL.